

Out of the bedroom, into your art gallery, classroom, library....

by Don Rossiter

Sex is dirty.

This is the message implicit in the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code, known as Bill C-54, now in its second reading in the House of Commons. The Bill sets out new and broadly defined regulations for what will be considered "pornography" in Canada, extending the state's interests beyond Canada's bedrooms into its classrooms, art galleries, movie theatres and libraries.

Initially put forth by Conservative Justice Minister Ray Hnatyshyn, Bill C-54 was seen as a measure to protect Canadians from violence, degradation, and sexual exploitation of women and, specifically, children. The Bill narrowly defines "erotica," as, essentially, depictions of nudity in a sexual context. This would subsequently classify depictions of all other acts of sexual activity, whether or not they are consensual and legal, as "pornography." Bill C-54 threatens to make depictions of adult sexuality illegal, whether it be for artistic, educational, or private purposes.

The Bill defines pornography as any "visual matter or commercial communication" showing (among other things) "sexually violent conduct, any act of intercourse, or a degrading act in a sexual context," or any type of sexual act whatever that "involves or is conducted in the presence of a person who is... or appears to be... under 18." This includes the exhibition (in a sexual context) of an adult female breast in the presence of a person who appears to be under 18. This definition would also place safer sex information, school sex education, anatomy material and countless works of art, film and literature within its broad criminal parameters.

The present obscenity provisions in the Criminal Code, which are based on community standards, would then be replaced by these amendments and make all artistic and cultural endeavours (film, theatre, literature, media...) subject to the regulations in the Bill. The proposed legislation would further place arbitration of contentious material in the hands of its government authors. Artists and writers would be deemed guilty until proven innocent, putting the onus on them to prove the inherent artistic-worth of their work.

Where a minor is concerned, however, there is no defence. Films,

such as *Blue Velvet*, which portrays a youth (who 'appears' to be under 18) witnessing a degrading sexual act, or *My Life as a Dog*, portraying the inquisitive fumbblings of two post-pubescent youngsters, would be deemed pornographic. There would be no defence for artistic merit. In effect, the government would take control of the arts and decide what can and cannot be seen by Canadians.

But material need not explicitly portray contentious practices to be charged. The Bill states that suggestion or advocacy of an act on the prohibited list is also subject to prosecution. The author or publisher of a text which contains characters who seem to advocate or indulge in any of the prohibited activities would also be considered criminal. This would serve to stifle the publication of materials relating to sex education, specifically information pertaining to birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS, to say nothing of the effects it would have on literary imaginations.

Contravention of the law can bring with it penalties of up to 10 years imprisonment for filmmakers, librarians, publishers, video retailers, booksellers, actors, artists, and in certain cases, anyone in possession of the works in question.

Opposition to the Bill is widespread. The Book and Periodical Council of Canada, ACTRA, Motion Picture Theatres Association of Canada, The Canadian Bar Association, Canadian Association of Video Distributors, the Writers Union of Canada as well as national coalition of gallery owners, booksellers and concerned citizens have all expressed their dissatisfaction with the language of the Bill and the government's attempt to legislate Canadian's fundamental right of artistic, cultural and sexual freedom.

In an interview for the *Toronto Star*, Hnatyshyn said the Bill was a "a product of extensive consultations with interested groups." Judging from the increasing number of groups from affected communities that have spoken out against Bill C-54, Hnatyshyn seems to have all but ignored their input. Stephanie Hutcheson, Chair of the Book and Periodical Development Council, said in a letter to the Justice Minister, "We would appear to have been consulted; however, our correspondence with your office has only been acknowledged, and

calendars or Bambi-sexual head shop poster art, all of this material must now be placed behind a screen or opaque wrap, at least 1.5 metres above the floor. Glad Day none of our concerns have been addressed in the new Bill."

An Angus Reid poll published soon after the Bill's introduction carried the following question, "Should depictions of sexual intercourse be suppressed?" Fifty-one per cent of respondents said "no"; 37 percent said "yes"; while the balance were undecided—once again highlighting the government's ignorance of Canadian public opinion on this issue.

In Ottawa, the Federal NDP and Liberal parties have both criticized the proposed legislation, with Burnaby MP Svend Robinson (NDP Justice Critic) proving a vocal and potent spokesman against it. In a speech to the Commons he said, "Bill C-54, instead of focusing as it should on violence, degradation and exploitation of children, represents an approach which is dangerous, puritanical and which is a right-wing obscenity in itself... Pornography in this Bill includes any sexual relations whatsoever... that approach will make Canada the most puritan country in the Western world." He suggested that the Bill is an attempt to appease the right-wing extremists in the Conservative Party.

Liberal MP's John Nunziata (York-South Weston) and Bob

Kaplan (York-Centre) are less apprehensive, criticizing Robinson for his opposition at this early stage. Both suggest Robinson's concerns would be more effective were it held until the Bill reaches Committee Stage, the final phase before Senate's final approval and ratification.

Right-wing dinosaurs such as Lynne Scime, National President of REAL Women of Canada, are quick to urge the Bill's ratification, saying, "Out of the dark shines a ray of hope in the form of Justice Minister Raymond Hnatyshyn's Bill C-54. At long last, a truly conservative Bill from the federal government."

This bill will make Canada the most puritan nation in the Western world

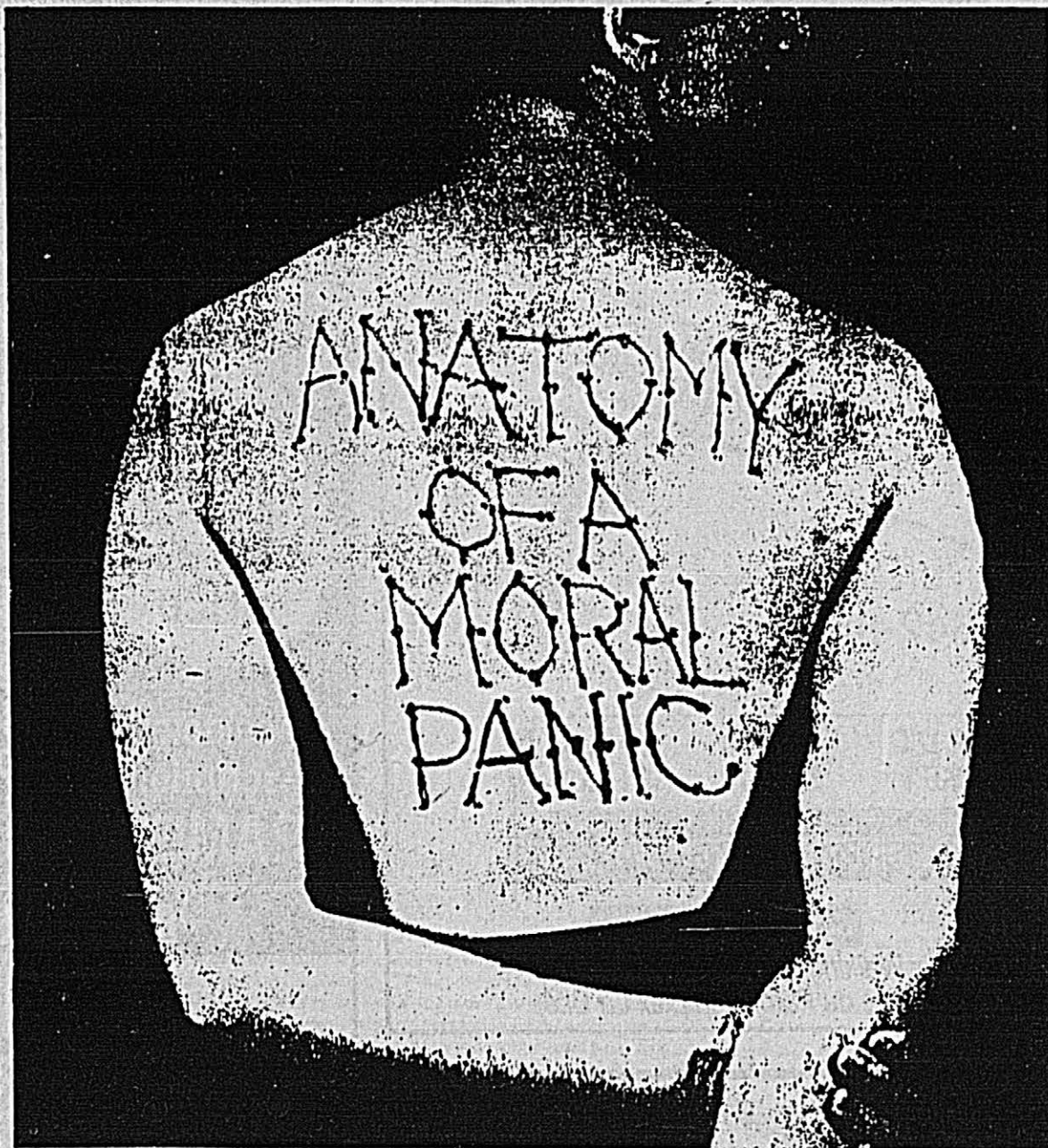
The spectre of C-54's restrictions has affected present handling of visual and written material all over Canada. In October, Jean Doré's Municipal government introduced a by-law (#7504) on the display of erotic printed matter. "Erotic" is here defined as "any material which excites or tends to excite the sexual instinct by showing all or part of the human body in such a position that attention is drawn to the breasts of the women, the pubis, the genital organs or the buttocks." No more peeks at "Best Buns"

(Toronto), Little Sister's (Vancouver) and L'Androgyne (Montréal) bookstores have all experienced trouble getting some of their orders into the country. These seizures by Canadian immigration officials have included recognized works of literature and safer sex information. Bill C-54 would increase these seizures, showing its marked discrimination against those cultural and sexual minorities (in this case gay, lesbian and feminist) for whom sexuality plays a far different role than in that of the 'dominant' culture. One would be hard pressed to describe how gay erotica/'porn' involving adults degrades women or children. Explorations of alternate forms of sexuality and erotica would largely be curtailed.

Bill C-54 fails to recognize that the critique of existing social and sexual imbalances provided by such explorations, particularly when placed in the context of works of art, probe much further and effectively than the imposition of broadly defined and ultimately limiting restrictions.

For further information, contact the Community Against Censorship, 24 Ryerson Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2P3.

Or more directly, by filling out a protest postcard to Prime Minister Mulroney—available, among other places, at L'Androgyne Bookstore and Multi-mags video rental counters.



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Students assemble to protest Israeli occupation

by Jorge Rivas
and Ayer Dawood

The recent Palestinian uprisings in the occupied territories are the result of a "coagulation of frustrations" built up following the death of four Palestinians killed by an Israeli army jeep in December, according to McGill Political Science Professor Sam Noumoff.

Noumoff spoke, along with four others, about the Palestinian liberation struggle in the West Bank to a packed Leacock auditorium last Tuesday.

The event was organized by the McGill Palestinian Solidarity Committee. According to committee member Nisreem Haram, "It was a good opportunity to feel that there are many Montréalers from all backgrounds who are deeply disturbed by what's going on in Palestine."

Qussai Samek, President of the Association Québécoise des Organismes de Coopération Internationale said the Palestinian people

are now taking the struggle into their own hands.

"Up until recently, the Palestinians have been living under the illusion that the Arab countries would solve their problems," he said. But at the recent Amman Summit not only was the Palestinian cause ignored, but "even the usual rhetoric was missing."

According to Noumoff, ending the occupation would not be in Israel's interest. "Israel derives \$1.25 billion from the occupied territories." Not only are Palestinians taxed without enjoying citizenship or voting rights, but Israel enjoys a massive trade surplus with the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank.

In addition, he said, more than 100 000 migrant Palestinian labourers who work at menial jobs in Israel are an essential part of the economy. Also, 55 per cent of the country's water supply comes from the occupied territories.

Samek criticized the Western media for having a pro-Israeli bias.

"When an Israeli settler was—unfortunately, and it was a horrible thing that it happened—killed by Palestinians, I learned through the media his name, his brother's name, where he lived, what he did for a living... you could feel the suffering in his death."

"The Palestinians who are being killed and wounded in large numbers are purely statistics," said Samek. "One never learns anything about them, only that they have died or have been beaten."

The recent debate over deporta-

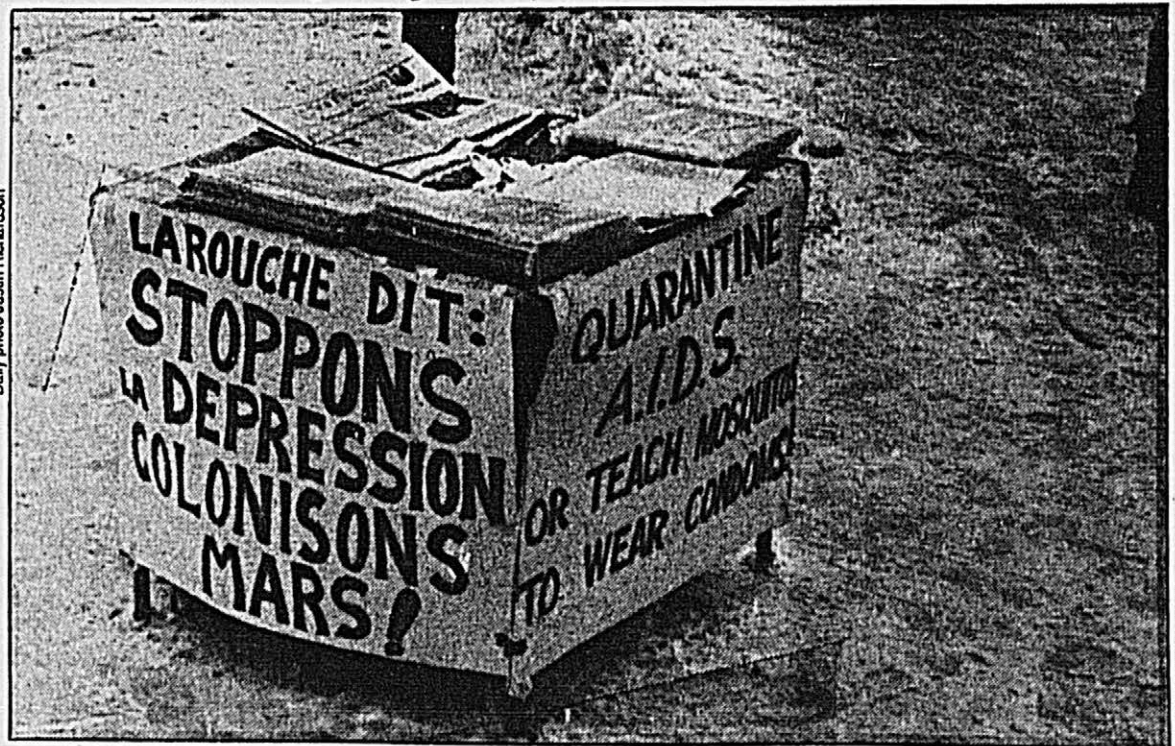
tions is also unusual, said Samek, since 1800 Palestinians have been deported since 1967, "in direct violation of the Geneva convention which Israel signed."

Parti Québécois MLA for de Maisonneuve Louise Harel said her party's policy on the Palestinians is closer to that of European countries than to the United States'. The PQ recognizes the PLO as the representatives of the Palestinian people.

Québec Liberal caucus leader Marcel Prud'homme criticized the government for its stance on the

situation in the occupied territories. "The things that are happening are unacceptable. If you believe in human rights, you must believe in them universally, not selectively," he said.

Members of the McGill committee circulated a petition asking the government to take a stand on the issue. Haram said, "We all need to help in whatever way we can. The primary hope of the group is to raise awareness and highlight the injustice that is occurring there."



In the spirit of the Free Trade agreement, campaigners for the 1988 wing-nut presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche gave tax-free-but-somewhat-taxing advice to passing students on Sherbrooke and McGill College last Tuesday. One campaigner asked not to have his picture in the *Daily*, explaining, "If they see my face in the paper, I might get shot."

The LaRouche campaign seems to be one of the more intriguing of the recent conquests of the White House, despite its flaws. Among his ideas, LaRouche wants to stop the depression by colonising Mars.

However, a few problems may be seen here. Male mosquitoes don't bite. And my bus pass is only valid for Earth and Saturn.

Tenants overcharged in tax confusion

by Evelyn Ligale

Many Montréal tenants may be unaware that recent city property tax re-evaluations could make them eligible for a rent decrease.

According to MCM Councillor Arnold Bennett, despite the furore over tax increases, some landlords have received reductions. This means their tenants have the right to refuse a rent increase, and sometimes apply for a reduction.

"The public should be notified of the changes in the taxes so that unscrupulous landlords do not demand high rent increases in cases where there should be a reduction in rents," said Bennett.

Bennett said the Rental Board should ensure that the public is well informed about the recent evaluations. He acknowledged the effort the Board made this year with newspaper announcements to inform tenants of the changes. But he said these articles, though detailed, did not specifically mention the rent reductions, albeit minimal in some buildings.

The Montréal Urban Community's (MUC) latest property tax evaluation has caused an uproar in some parts of the city. Some property owners in Montréal West, Outremont and LaSalle have seen their 1988 tax bills skyrocket

by as much as 60 per cent. Despite their complaints, the homeowners must still pay the inflated tax bills by February 15.

Last year the Québec Municipal Affairs Minister André Bourbeau passed Bill 82 which allows a ceiling on evaluation increases, limiting how high tax bills can rise. Montréal, Ville St. Laurent and Lachine used this legislation. As a result no property owner in these regions has had an increase of more than 15 per cent.

Other MUC municipalities did not use Bill 82 because they found the shortfall of revenue would have to be made up by taxpayers with lower evaluations. In these areas some tax increases led angry residents to organise protests and circulate petitions. According to Bennett, in those areas not adopting the ceiling there are great discrepancies. Taxes have increased by \$500 on one building while another building on the same block has had a \$500 tax reduction.

"We are working to try and reduce these inequities," he said. "Although the provincial government tells municipalities how to collect their taxes, the property evaluations is up to the MUC. The Bill 82 option does exist but it is up to each municipality to decide whether to adopt the Bill or not."

Senate dumps new fee

by Katie Downie

McGill's Dietetics and Human Nutrition Undergraduate Society's proposal to implement a \$45.00 per student fee increase was sent back to the drawing board by Senate at last Tuesday's meeting. The fee would be used to cover membership in the Canadian Dietetic Association.

DHNUS President Ioannis Felemegos was upset by Senate's decision. "We didn't see any problem with the proposal. It seemed pretty cut and dry." The DHNUS's decision was based on a simple majority instead of the usual two-thirds majority vote required for constitutional amendments.

But Students' Society VP University Affairs Maria Battaglia said, "Procedurally, they've done

everything correctly. The bottom line is, they did get a majority vote on this issue."

The contention dividing academic and student senators was over how much jurisdiction Senate has over a decision made by an autonomous student body. According to professor E. Pederson of the Faculty of Education, the problem resided in the method the DHNUS used to obtain their majority vote. "A decision was made on the behalf of the students, therefore it is our responsibility to see that correct procedures have been followed," he said.

The Canadian Dietetic Association is an outside organization which is not in any way affiliated with McGill. "We are getting ourselves into a dangerous situation when we ask the university to col-

lect money on behalf of students for an outside organization," said professor Macdonald, Dean of the Faculty of Law. Professor Bennett, Associate Dean of Management, further questioned, "What if the money were for an outside body we did not consider honourable?" Bennett cited membership in the Communist Party of Canada as a possible example.

Benette added that "there is no advantage for students in the fact that McGill collects their membership fee. They could give it voluntarily." Membership in the CDA would be no cheaper whether students join with or without McGill.

Senate finally approved Engineering Rep Phillip Baumier's motion to send the report "back to the DHNUS where it would be discussed more thoroughly".

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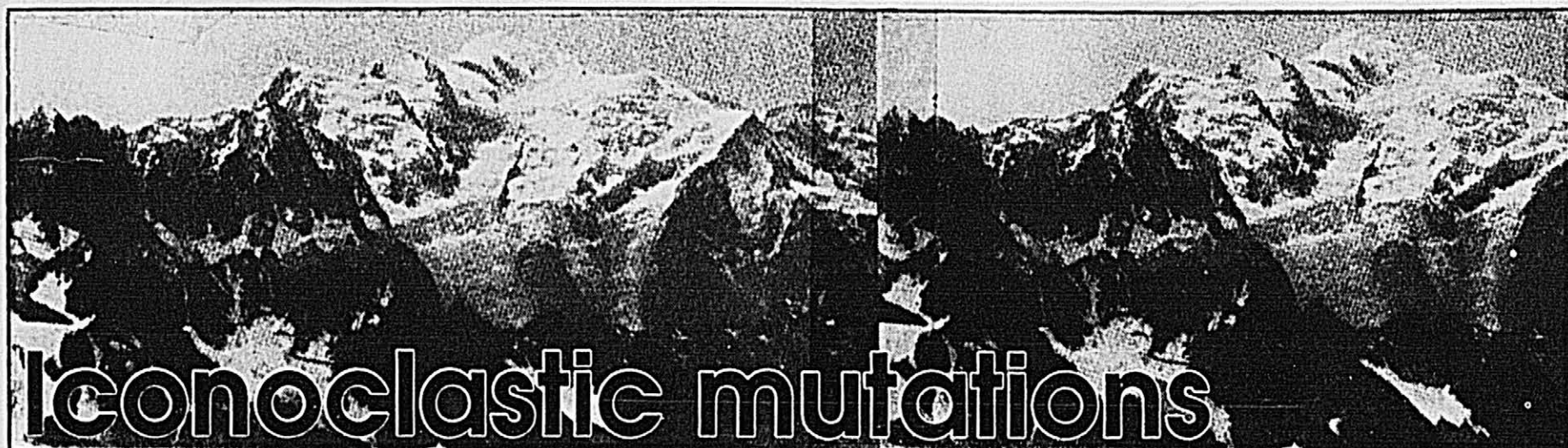
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Zembra's Rocks
by Louis Dudek
Montréal, Vehicule, 1986.

by Andrew Flynn

It is difficult to characterise the work of a prolific poet such as Louis Dudek, whose career has spanned several generations. Poetry is never static. Its voices change over time as poets define and re-define the genre in response to their observations and experience. Consequently, many poets are catalogued in time, placed like icons in the literary shrines known as 'movements' or labelled according to the socio-historical period in which they produced their art.

But for those who have witnessed the rapidly changing perspectives of the last half-century, poetry has been a medium in constant mutation, adapting its conventions and limits in order to explore an inconsistent world.

Dudek, turning 70 this year, belongs to this last half-century. He has been writing poetry and criticism, teaching, editing and publishing in Canada for close to fifty years. His latest published work, *Zembra's Rocks*, is a collection of poetry released for the first time in book form. The poems draw on a lifetime of experience, reflecting the shifting textures of poetry from the post-war decades until today from a thoroughly Canadian perspective. From professor to satirist to lyrical observer of everyday life, the many voices of Dudek are present in *Zembra's Rocks*.

Vulgar documents

by Riki Shore

Photography can manifest itself in many different forms. Galerie Optica presents photography as "The Vulgar Document." Even under this more specific heading, the works show a diversity of style and subject-matter.

"It is not about obscene pictures," explains Optica's promotional literature. The exhibit shows "how photography has questioned and explored the potentials of the documentary."

The photos pose questions to every viewer. The show questions the verity of the world represented—"Is the world you see your world?" Furthermore, is there a place for you in this world? Are men and women represented correctly? As there is diversity of style, there is a multiplicity of meaning in this show.

The thirteen artists represented hail from three different countries—further emphasizing the variety. Lee Friendlander of New York presents several black and white photos of monuments taken from unusual viewpoints. The titles consist of the name and location of each monument, rendering her pictures historical documents.

continued on page 6

While it would be greatly misleading to represent *Zembra's Rocks* as anything but a commendable collection, it often seems that a large deal of stone must be sifted to find the gems among the plainer shale of this volume. Poems such as "Hilary Our Kitten" and "Retirement" are too simple and cloying, perceptual vignettes too brief and underdeveloped to be interesting to most readers of modern verse. Dudek never claimed to represent only intense experience in his poetry, but, lines such as these from "Riding Home":

*If my body was a car
I'd trade it in for a new model.
It's beginning to go,
and the repairs cost more and more*

show the least interesting side of the poet's voice.

Similarly, much of the love poetry in *Zembra's Rocks* falls flat because it is emotionally stifled and conventional. "Maeve" and "The Young Lover" are both unimpressive, bland love poems which lack the vital intensity that Dudek obviously has in his power to employ.

Dudek's poetic treatment of women (the poems are written from a distinctly male perspective) could be appropriately ascribed to generations long past. Consider:

*...I'd hate to leave your world
darling*

The death of prayer

by Paul Horwitz

Somewhere along the line, director Mike Hodges must have gotten either very confused or very timid when he chose to adapt *The Eagle Has Landed* by Jack Higgins into *A Prayer for the Dying*.

He seems to have thought it impossible to make a film about redemption without throwing a few pop formalities into the mix. This misconception flaws what is otherwise an intelligent, well-acted movie.

In the film, Martin Fallow (Mickey Rourke) is an ex-IRA guerilla who has retired from the army in moral confusion. He comes to London and is coerced by gangster Jack Meehan (Alan Bates) into making one last kill. His reward—\$50 000, a passport, and safe passage out of England. The only snag is that a priest, Father Da Costa, witnesses the act.

Reluctant to kill Da Costa (Bob Hoskins), Fallow instead forces him into absolute secrecy by confessing the crime to him officially—turning the information into a sacred trust. But if he thinks this will allow him to bury his past, Fallow is certainly proved wrong. The police want him arrested. Meehan wants him cremated. The IRA considers his existence a political liability. And as if all that weren't hazardous enough, he falls in love with Da Costa's blind niece (Sammi Davis), even though he knows he is just a transient fugitive.

Central to all this is the relationship between Fallow and Da Costa, who is himself a retired army man. Da Costa tries to bring Fallow back into the Catho-

lic fold, but Fallow is suffering from a feeling that all the carnage he once was an important part of proves the senselessness of life. Nor is he able to untangle himself from his past sins without sacrifice.

This is probably the most effective part of the whole movie. It's intelligent, well-scripted, and carries a great deal of emotional immediacy. Mickey Rourke and Bob Hoskins are both excellent in *Prayer for the Dying*. Rourke, besides managing a lifelike Irish accent, is superb as a man who finds that it's not so easy to return from experience to innocence. Veteran character actor Hoskins proves that he deserves more leading roles, playing Da Costa's furious anger at his declared role of peace-maker.

But to see them, it's necessary to sit through a lot of weaker material. As a thriller the movie is okay, but its tension is weakened by a reliance on overused clichés. Bates' character is competently acted, but the emotionally disturbed gangster figure is becoming a little tiresome. The love story is the most prone to resort to mawkish dialogue, but works well in the end through of Rourke and Davis' talents.

At times *A Prayer For the Dying* becomes irritating to watch. Hodges has assembled first-rate actors in an interesting story, and they perform flawlessly. The trouble lies in choosing to focus too little on the spiritual essence of the movie, and instead making room for too many unnecessary "necessities".

A Prayer for the Dying is now at Le Faubourg.

Canadian poets such as Scott, Smith and Klein and the post-modern generation of present day. *Zembra's Rocks* seems to serve as a barometer of attitude, a semi-biographical pastiche of literary progress since World War II. Dudek is undeniably Canadian, unwillingly cast under the shadow of American culture while maintaining an informed critical perspective on both worlds. The value of *Zembra's Rocks* for Canadian readers lies predominantly in its overview of the growth of a Canadian mind. It may tell us more about Canadian identity in literature than a handful of anthologized pedagogy will ever hope to do.

The little comp

by Anna Asimakopulos

Since its inception two years ago, Montréal Danse has been touring its eclectic repertoire of performances across the country. This contemporary dance company is composed of eleven dancers and eight choreographers, ranging from well-known names to relative newcomers.

During their Montréal run this weekend, the company will perform five works. One of them, Catherine Tardif's *Train*, is a vibrant piece with seven dancers who portray what might be a group of passengers. The dancers keep up a furious pace, returning often to the motif of rocking, train-like movement.

"People can interpret what they want from *Train*," Tardif told the *Daily*.



by Egg

This is not a... You read it, any... big deal like if... even though th... with the Asex... hardcore galax... from TO), the... Bliminals play... They're the one... bands they've... ously. Togethe... pop-rock, mixe... The Rising Sun... Paul Arthur... there's still tim... Now at Peel P... French alterna... Black Citron, a... Switzerland pl... Bar, proceeds g... of Community... Friday, Horn... on, Founounes... flies on Friday... Wednesdays... special cheap d... At American... Harper's Rhytl... Saturday the... Union Ballroo... travaganza, be... Valentines Da... play Founoun... guy came up

"For a spectato... of images, like... and breathe w... movement in a... tention and eno... raphy a relaxin... dances come o

While in tow... also showcase... reographers—... James Kudelka... André Fortier... dorado and F... large-scale wo

Savoie's con... pressors and th... and moving... power one gn... another—a po... use.

itchy introduction. Ha ha. Anyway. Tonight is a really you miss it you're a loser they're from West Island equals at Foulfoules with e (even though they're Problem Children. The at American Rock Café. s with a promo list of 112 each played with previ- r they're a mish-mash of d with a violin and a sax. blueses you happy with & Raisin' Cane. And, ne to catch The Perfect ub Showbar. Red Tape, ative, play Station 10. n Urban Tribal Band from ay a benefit at the Loup ing toward the purchase Press. or and Gore. From now will be showing horror s, and cult classics on starting at 14h00. Also, rrafts and POPcorn. yum. Rock Café, Charlie m Rockets. 20, GALOM bash in the m. Post-Valentine ex- cause nobody really likes y, anyway. Talk Shop s. McGill content—this to me in Leacock and

foisted a poster on me. They're upbeat, alternative, fun, yay, go. Or, get your healthy dose of Buganza Power (no, I don't know what that is, either, but it ought to chase the azangubs outta ya), at Club Kaotis, a new African disco. Station 10 presents electronic dance with Degrees of Freedom. Also, Repo Man—cult classic and a half at 20h, at McGill.

Sunday, Degrees of Freedom repeat Station 10. American Rock Café has Red Tape, and I already told you what they were like, so too bad if you weren't paying attention.

Monday the 22. Opposite extremes (no, that's not a band), with blues Billy Craig & the Blue Shadows at the Rising Sun, and head banger heavy metal Crystal at Station 10 with a special mystery guest that nobody knows.

Tuesday, Crystal again, and at the Rising Sun features Reggae Night. The Wanted, guitar-heavy rock, play Poodles. But wait... free, free, from see-kay-you-tea, it's The Service from Chicago, and Wild Touch. Wild Touch are Québécois, said to fall "between post-punk England and Swampland America."

Wednesday, Tupelo Chain Sex. They have an album called, "We wear socks on our cocks". That should give you a clue... good, clean fun at Café Campus, that is, as long as they come after laundry day. My cigarette is finished, so that means the end.

any that could

er, Train would be a series the cinema. They see it with it. There's a lot of group at the level of in-ergy." She finds choreog- ing process and said the ut organized intuitively.

wn, Montréal Danse will works by four other cho-oudain l'hiver dernier by, O-pe-ra Savan by Paul-Jean Pierre Perrault's El-ierre-Paul Savoie's first k, Ce n'est guère civil.

osition deals with op-eoppressed. It is a painful work, focussing on the up in society has over ver it does not hesitate to

Eldorado, which was last performed in Montréal during the company's show last February, consists of constantly changing relationships between movement and gravity. Perrault explores equilibrium and space by having the dancers run up gable-like structures, pause, sway forward until they reach critical mass, lean over until parallel to the ground and then rush down the other side. The dancers move at different paces—singly, in twos, threes, or all together, much like the Montréal Danse company itself.

This innovative company can be seen to-night through Saturday at Théâtre Maisonneuve in Place des Arts. Shows begin at 20h00, and tickets are \$12, \$15 and \$18.50. They will also be performing March 9 at Maison de la Culture Maisonneuve.



Photo—Dominique Durocher

This is the era of the interview. From the *Paris Review* to "Entertainment Tonight", information-hungry enthusiasts of stars with tight buns and pataphysical theory hang upon the words, the counsels and the drop-pings of their cultural deities.

Perhaps the best commentary on the phenomena appeared in *Doomsday* a few years ago, when 'Marvellous' Mark Slackmeyer inadvertently stopped short a radio conversation with a hot celebrity by asking exactly what he was celebrated for—did he write, sing, act, was he an athlete? The interviewee couldn't remember.

One of the latest contributions to the worldwide cesspool of oral history is *So To Speak*, a book of interviews with contemporary Canadian writers edited by Rubicon's Peter O'Brien. Among the mouths opening and closing in its pages are those of Josef Skvorecky, Roo Borson, Rudy Wiebe, Peter Van Toorn, Nicole Brossard, Christopher Dewdney, Margaret Atwood, Jack Hodgins, Erin Mouré, Mavis Gallant and Leon Rooke. All the interviews are culled from past and future issues of *Rubicon*, and were conducted (a bit atypically in the world of personality journalism) either by informal conversation or by mail.

There is something at once unCanadian and uniquely Canuck about this book. First of all, some of the authors were interviewed in the United States and many of them were born abroad or are now "ex-Canadians"—a distinctly Canadian aspect. And the cool wind blowing through these chats (in which the authors often treat the journalists as equals and answer with questions) is so free of hero-worship that it could only come from the modest North. The un-Canadian quality, in fact, comes from the very idea of assembling these interviews—we don't like our artists to get cocky, after all.

The interviews themselves are as varied in flavour as you might expect from examining the roster. Each piece is done in a style suitable to its subject. The section on Christopher Dewdney is illustrated with cryptic diagrams drawn from his father's book of Indian rock paintings. Margaret Atwood is obviously the driver in her interview, which she steers mostly towards an exploration of the intersection between art and politics (and her recent work with PEN international). And Leon Rooke is introduced by a full-face fedora-sporting photograph that prepares the reader well for an author whose comment on the state of short fiction in England is "In England the sky is too foul, the eyes too close together; it's too rainy, too foggy, and now even the beer has declined. God help them if they



The age of the

INTERVIEW

by carl p. wilson iii

while "we cannot go along with the madness of men in their sexual fantasies." The book is also a collection of thoughts that will keep even the keenest mind buzzing for hours.

However, the question remains whether 'The Interview' is a legitimate and beneficial form of cultural exchange. The book certainly demonstrates that it is worth listening to our artists on a plethora of issues. But there is a false sense of literacy to be gained by reading interviews with writers whose works you've never ever seen (a fault to which I myself confess). Perhaps the current preoccupation with personality serves only to distract us all from the literature at hand—it is certainly a distraction for the objects of attention, the authors. And what does it mean that a review of *So To Speak* is appearing in this space instead of a critique of any contemporary Canadian writings?

hadn't had ships for plundering innocent little colonies."

As interviewers go, the journalists represented in this collection are pretty respectable. They demonstrate an intimate knowledge of their subjects' work and share the writers' worlds of discourse. Sometimes, however, the extent to which it is assumed that the reader shares this familiarity is detrimental to the effectiveness of the pieces.

Too often in the conversations with poets, the interviewers indulge their curiosity and ask about the meanings of specific lines. Obscure concepts in the writers' works are sometimes alluded to without explanation, as when O'Brien asks Dewdney if he sees himself as a "remote control agent." This accentuates the problem of restricted audience that is alluded to in several of the conversations about the state of modern literature.

So To Speak is full of rare treasures for fans of Canadian literature: Roo Borson's ideas on how to revive the profession of poet in the modern age, Skvorecky's warm but stern stand on ideology and technique, Chris Dewdney's humour and almost frightening intelligence, Clea Notar, editor of the Québec feminist publication (*Flip*), and her rapport with Nicole Brossard in a bilingual interview in which each participant spoke her second language, Rooke's epigrammatic, surreal approach to the question and answer format and the surprising inclusion of the unprolific but brilliant poet Peter Van Toorn.

There are enough ideas and ideologies in this collection to make just about anybody mad somewhere along the line—from Skvorecky's blanket condemnation of Communist governments (including Nicaragua's) to Brossard's belief that erotica by women and lesbians must be protected from censorship

What a long strange trip it's been...

by Hal Euce and A. Schon

The Grateful Dead have been around for a long, long time. They began as a group of suburban ex-folkies in San Francisco in the mid-60s. Fed up with the sit-and-pluck mentality of the folk music scene, guitarist Jerry Garcia started Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Band with fellow guitarist Bob Weir and harpist/pianist Pigpen. Jerry's great. He's a bluegrass guitar master, you know. He plays a lot better now that he quit drugs. —Anne Smith, 20.

The Jug Band were bonded by their love for musical innovation and by their misfit past. Garcia was a high school drop-out and an army kick-out (they called him unfit for service). Weir was a boarding school dropout, pretending to be 21 when he joined the Jug Band. Pigpen was the son of a semi-renowned R&BDJ who became semi-renowned himself by playing blues harp at parties.

The thing I really like about Dead Heads is the fact that they accept everyone. I mean, physically, we aren't the most appealing bunch. But we look inside you. We want to know what you are as a person, not what kind of clothes you wear or what your hair is like. That shit doesn't matter. —Dave Chase, 22.

The Jug Band was almost gigless until a local music store owner offered to loan them equipment to start a rock band. Armed with drums and various electronic musical equipment, they were joined by drummer Bill Krutzman.

Phil Leash joined as bass player after meeting Garcia at a party. Garcia tapped Leash on the shoulder and said, "Guess what, you're gonna be our bass player." Leash had never played bass before, but was a semi-genius on violin and trumpet.

With this line-up, the Jug Band metamorphosed into the Warlocks, playing the trashy Hollywood booze and cruise scene. To live up to the predictable singles bar routine, the Warlocks began to play songs longer, louder, and weirder. It was a malicious attempt to isolate and overpower the California-chic clientele they played for.

I'm a musician. For me, music is trying to get higher and closer to what I really am. The Dead understand that. The Dead aren't performers. They don't care about what kind of music sells or what's popular. They care about the music.

Yeah, sometimes it doesn't work. They can't always be at their peak. But getting in trouble can be a trip, too. If you reject the bad and just take the good, then you're not getting the whole thing. Both are part of your consciousness. I understand that. So I don't mind when the Dead are off musically. —George Hadfield, 24.

The only people who dug the Warlocks were Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters. At one point, somebody decided to have a party, with the Warlocks supplying the music and the Pranksters supplying everything else. This became the first Acid Test. The Warlocks subsequently dropped out of the straight scene and spent the next six months playing only Acid Tests.

Everyone thinks the Dead are some kind of drug band, but they're not. A lot of people who like the Dead smoke pot, but it's not like its necessary to enjoy the music. You can go and just dance and still have a good time. Besides, drugs aren't as bad as everyone thinks they are. Like, when we have parties and everyone trips, it's really fun. We all become part of one another. It's not like everybody is doing something. Everybody does bits and pieces. Then you get something new. It's the same with Dead shows. Everybody does a little bit. The band plays, the audience dances and everyone has a really good time. —Kris Hill, 23.

During one acid test, the Warlocks decided to change their name. Leash was smoking DMT and opened the Oxford English Dictionary. In what may (or may not) have been a hallucination, he saw the words 'Grateful' and 'Dead' juxtaposed on one page. Leash later said the words stood out as if they were written in gold and surrounded by blackness.

The name Grateful Dead can mean what you like it to mean. It's great like that. It can mean life in death, ego-death, reincarnation, whatever. —Heather Perkins, 21.

By 1966, the acid tests were over and the Dead were trying to bring their magic to a wider audience. They began holding a series of dances. Weir once said, "those dances were glorified parties. If we had a bad night we could usually take solace in the fact that the crowd had a good time."

We haven't had a party in a long time. Jake, my boyfriend, doesn't want to open up the farm. It's been too cold.

The last party we had was at the end of the summer. Jim Kelly's band played. They were great. Everybody was celebrating for the last time before the summer ended. We were going nuts. Everybody was dancing in the fields. You could hear the band everywhere. It was a really great time. Except Jake got pissed off when this kid started messing around with the goats. —Donna Santinello, 23.

The dances began in the Carousel Ballroom, which was an old Irish dance hall, with the Jefferson Airplane, Country Joe and The Fish and Quicksilver Messenger Service. However, the Carousel deals fell through due to bad management and bad finances.

The Dead were too West Coast for me. In the '60s, I was into more bluesy stuff, like Ian and Sylvia or Patti LaBelle. The Dead were into this whole lifestyle trip, which wasn't really my thing. I liked Jefferson Airplane. They were probably my favorite West Coast band. —Rose-Marie DeVinney, 45.

In the spring of '68, the show moved to the smaller Fillmore Auditorium. The Fillmore was the 2nd floor ballroom of an old mansion located in a Black ghetto of San Francisco. These shows were going on at the time of Martin Luther

King's assassination and the polarization of White and Black in America.

Dead Heads aren't that open. They're pretty sexist and some of them are racist. Not all of them, though. Just some. But I guess you find that everywhere. It's just that Dead have this reputation as being so incredible. I don't think they are. Jerry Garcia's a good guitarist, but come on. They're just a band. —Jeff Hill, 18.

The Dead left the Fillmore arrangement due to dissatisfaction with music entrepreneur Bill Graham. The Dead considered Graham the evil commercialiser who ruined the San Francisco scene. The era of hippie innocence was over and the Dead moved out beyond the San Francisco scene.

It would've been great to have gone to one of those San Francisco shows. Like, all those people, the energy must have been really wild. Now, sometimes, when you go to shows, you see these 16 year old kids who drove up to the show in their mom's Saab paying 40 bucks for a tie-die T-shirt. I can't understand it. It's like the band that was most into NOT having an image has become the cool thing to do. —Bob Smith, 37.

The Dead have made at least one major tour every year since the '60s. In the spring of '72, the Dead toured

Europe with a 48-member entourage. This included the band, various singers, managers, equipment people, drivers, lovers, babies and friends.

Even if you don't like the Dead's music, you can't help liking their shows. It's like an enormous dance party. The best thing about Dead shows are the hardcore bohemians that go. I was at a show this summer, and my friends and I were hanging out in our truck before the show. These two really freaked-out women came up to me and started calling me Isis and praying to me and kissing my feet. They parted with us for a while. But then they ran off and said they were going to bring me gifts. I was psyched for them, but they didn't come back. —Donna Santinello.

The Dead's album output dwindled to the occasional, sporadic effort after the release of their third studio creation, *Axomoxoa*, in 1969. Since then, the Dead's music has survived mostly through bootleg recordings made at their live shows.

You can be listening to some totally obscure bootleg in your car before a show, and some old guy will walk up to you and go "Ahh, Philadelphia, 1976." And he'll be right. It's really weird. —Dave Chase.

... vulgar

continued from page 4

Bob Burley's photos of set constructions and various interior settings emphasize the question, "Is the world you see your world?" His scenes are completely uninhabited, stressing that there is no room there for the viewer.

Several artists' works are surrealistic in nature—Lucie Lefebvre's pictures verge on the absurd. She presents a world where unrelated objects are juxtaposed to create unrealistic scenes.

In Laurie Simmon's work, mannequins inhabit cartoon-like spaces or are placed in front of well-known tourist sights. She uses Stonehenge and the Acropolis as vehicles for her surrealistic style. Her Stonehenge is tinted pink, and is visited by red mannequins which resemble the Michelin man. These photographs question not only the verity of the represented world, but also "the photographer's authority to edit your world."

Photography can be used to document common human situations. George McGrady has two works which show generic people made from patterns. These figures are faceless and lack all individuality.

Underneath these scenes are captions which explain the situation, such as "Under The Spreading Chestnut Tree I sold you and you sold me."

Two other artists have collaborated to produce a narrative illustrated with photos and drawings. The work documents one man's relationship with a woman, and his thoughts as he considers the past relationship. It is an exploration of human emotions and situations.

Possibly the most poignant work is the triptych, "The Blues." Created by three artists, it examines racial issues. In two pieces, Black men are persecuted by White aggressors. In the last piece, entitled "Double Edge", a White and a Black are separated by a door. The photo includes a quote which questions our perception of the races, and also of certain racial issues.

This is a multi-faceted exhibit which challenges each viewer about our world and the human condition. The diversity and intensity in range of creative styles is most rewarding.

"Towards The Photograph as a Vulgar Document" is showing at Galerie Optica until 28 February.

events

Thursday
TheatreSports improvisational comedy in the Alley, 22h00.

Centre for East Asian Studies presents Halifax History Professor John Lee on Kiyosawa Manshi: Philosopher and Reformer in Modern Japanese Buddhism, 16h30 in Rm. 100, 3434 McTavish.

Friday
Osler Medical Aid Foundation presents Professor Margaret Lock on Health for the People: Culture and the Transfer of Medical Technology to the Third World, Rm. 1034, McIntyre Medical Building at 13h00.

Central America Group meeting, 12h00, Union 425/26.
Nicaraguan Ambassador Sergio Lacayo will speak on the Central America Peace Plan, 20h00, Concordia Hall Building, Rm. 937.

Muslim Students' Association Friday prayer, 13h15, Union room to be announced.

Department of Sociology present Professor Ronald Dore speaking on The Uses of Evolutionary Theory, 15h00 on Leacock 738.

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341 - APTS., ROOMS, HOUSING

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372 - LOST & FOUND

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374 - PERSONAL

Gay or lesbian? Need to talk? Peer counselling offered in Union 417, Monday to Thursday, from 19h00 to 22h00 or call GALOM at 398-6822.

To Peter of Champlain: thanks for being such a sweet guy on Saturday. See you at the next Engineering Pub Nite? Ann.

Single Med. student, 27, wishes to share closeness and good times with attractive woman. Respect, sincerity, affection — a guy who'll hold you close and stay the night; lots of fun and

laughter, too. Flexible, relaxed situation preferred - no thoughts of wedding bells please. TLC, PO Box 686, CDN Station, H3S 2V4.

You know that woman/man you've been looking at all semester? Well they'll be at the Seven Barry Band Sat February 27. A benefit for Farde-Manger sponsored by Gertrudes at - guess where - Gertrudes.

Basketball doubleheader vs Concordia: Friday Feb 19, Lady Stingers vs #9 ranked McGill Martlets 6:30pm, Men Stingers vs Redmen 8:30pm. At Curie Gym, 475 Pine Ave W.

Going nowhere for reading week? Neither are we. McGill Nightline: remaining open Feb 19-28 from 9pm to 3am: 398-6246. Resuming regular hours Feb 29.

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385 - NOTICES

Questions concerning birth control? Women's Union Birth Control Co-op, Union 423. Tuesdays and Thursdays - afternoons, Jennifer or Jacqueline. Condoms, foam, gel and diaphragms available.

Photographers: enter MUPS's 10th Annual photo contest/exhibition. Deadline for submissions March 4. 8x10 and mounted. For more info go to room B06 in the Union. Enter those photos!

Coming back to Kingston for reading week? Meet your friends at the Prince George Hotel. Show your McGill ID for free admission to Dollar Bill's. 200 Ontario Street. 549-5440.

387 - VOLUNTEERS

Help raise funds for food bank. Needed: rock guitar tutor for teenager, big sister for teenager and more. McGill volunteer bureau 398-6819, Union 414 12 - 2pm.

Wanted: Roadies for upcoming musical events at Gertrudes and Club Soda. Call soon! (Corinne at 931-8830). Also other volunteers for Le Garde Manger needed. Our food bank needs your time.

CAMP MAROMAC, a Children's Resident Summer Camp requires staff for the following positions from July 1, 1988 to August 14, 1988: Counsellors, Instructors for: Swimming, Sailing, Sailboarding, Canoeing, Waterskiing, Ski Boat Driver, Tennis, Land Sports, Gymnastics, Computers, Music, Aerobics. Assistant Waterfront Director. Registered Nurses, Nurses' Aides, Secretaries, Assistant Food Service Manager, Waitresses, Assistant Cooks, Potwashers, Canteen Manager, General Maintenance. Excellent salary and working conditions. Call between 9:00am and 5:00pm - 933-4836.

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JOINT SENATE BOARD COMMITTEE ON THE DISABLED

Draft Statement on Proposed Fee Increase

The Joint Committee on the Disabled endorses the Students' Society resolution to levy for a period of two years a fee of two dollars per student per semester, the resulting revenue to be allocated to the provision of services, equipment and facilities for disabled students. The Committee congratulates ACCESS MCGILL and the Students' Society for having taken such initiative and urges every student to vote on March 9, 10 and 11 in support of the resolution.

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DR. URSULA FRANKLIN
on
"UNIVERSITIES AND THE
PURCHASING OF KNOWLEDGE"

The second lecture sponsored by the McGill Committee of Concerned Scholars is on Thursday, February 25 at 4:00 p.m., Leacock 26. The speaker is an outspoken University of Toronto scientist, Ursula Franklin, a distinguished chemist and metallurgist. Dr. Franklin is the recipient of this years' award from the Canadian Association of Women in Science. Everybody welcome

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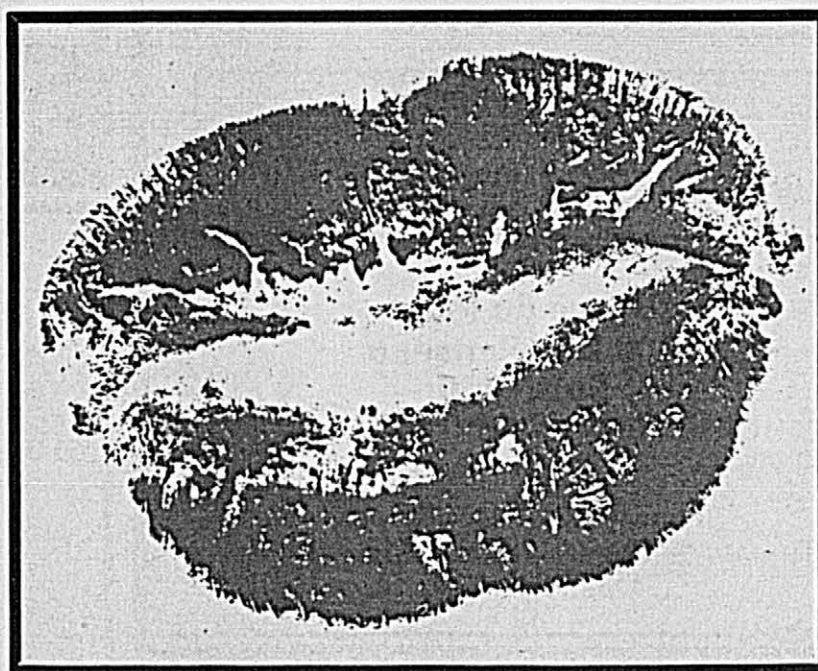
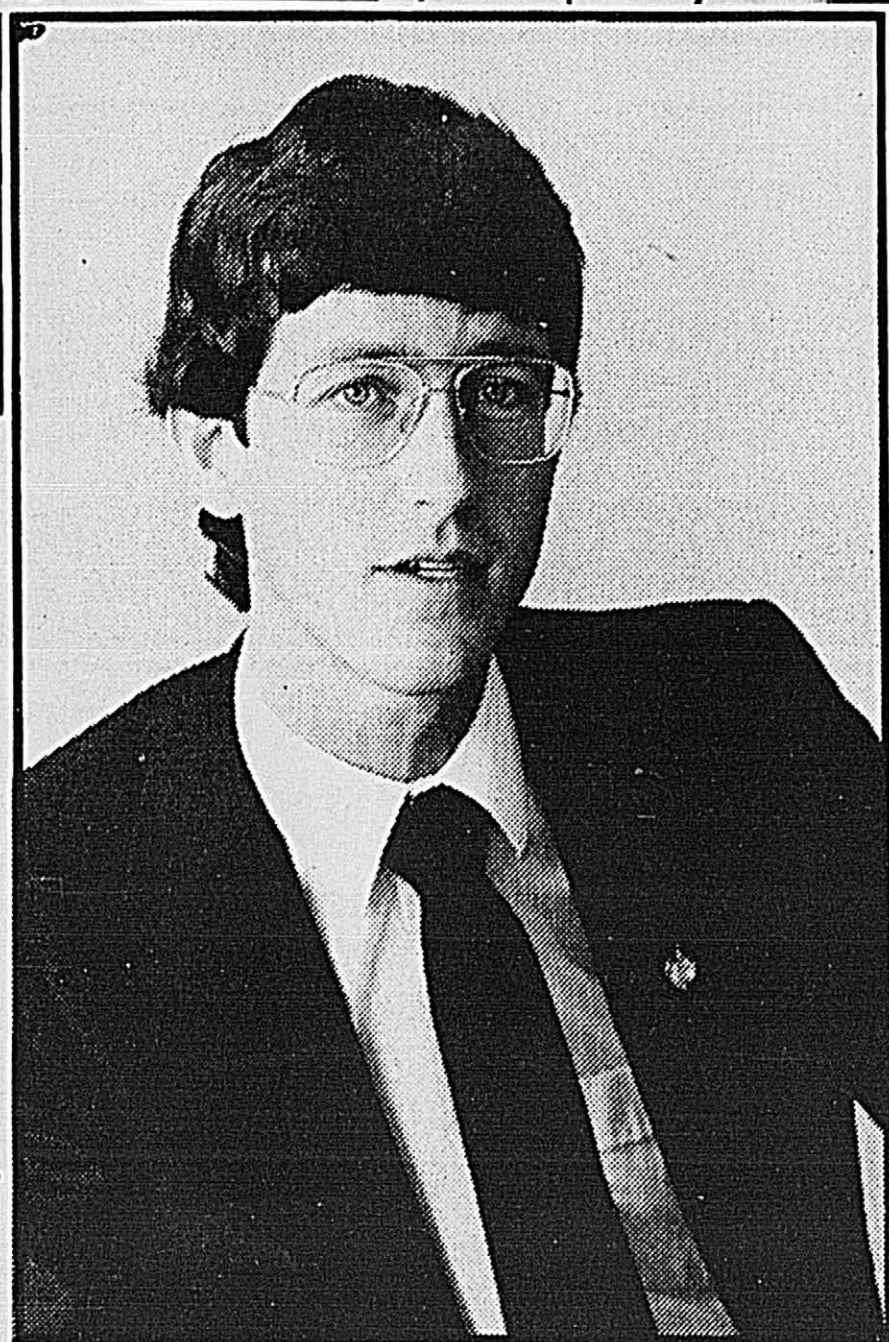
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Daily

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Wednesday, March 9
Thursday, March 10
Friday, March 11

NOMINATIONS ARE BEING EXTENDED FOR THE POSITION OF:
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Six students must be elected to the Board of Directors from the student body at large.

Candidates must:

- 1) be members in good standing of the Daily Publications Society. (All members of the Students' Society are members of the Publications Society.)
- 2) submit nomination forms with signatures of 20 students as well as a pensketch of no more than 100 words indicating your name and faculty.
- 3) not be staff members of or regular contributors to the McGill Daily.
- 4) nor may they be members of Student Council of the McGill Students' Society.

Official nomination forms are available at the
Students' Society General Office, Rm #105, 3480 McTavish Street.
All Nomination must be submitted to the
Students' Society General Office by March 3rd.

Celebrating our sexuality

This is an issue that speaks for lesbians and gays. It addresses lesbian and gay interests without fear and without prejudice. This is what we want. This week is also Lesbian and Gay Awareness Week at McGill.

Both this issue and the activities taking place on campus are expressions of our sexuality and our community.

AIDS has caused too many gays to downplay the sexual aspect of their lives. Yet it is this aspect which is crucial and which both lesbians and gay men must discuss openly and freely. To deny our sexuality is to oppress ourselves. To express it is to take control of our liberation.

This issue does not seek to establish any gay and lesbian consensus. Rather it should allow us a forum to discuss those issues that are relevant to our sexuality and to its manifestations in our culture and our community.

The only theme that is present throughout this issue is the expression of ourselves as lesbians and gay men celebrating our sexuality.

Don Rossiter

Eric Smith

Stephanie Lachowicz



INSIDE

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Tongue in your mouth, gun in your side

Of all available types of genre fiction, the murder mystery must rank second only to porn in the hearts of gay male readers. It is also finding increasing popularity among lesbians.

by Paul Weil-Brenner

Writing with a new voice, one that speaks to us, settings that we recognize, provides situations in which we can cheer and jeer. If crime fiction tackles questions of justice, chaos and the restoration of order, then let it be on our terms. The feared other is not the sexual invert but rather the homophobic. Justice is taken into our hands and meted out by us, since the institutions that govern our society do not include us in the way we would like. The following is a guide to what is currently available on the shelves. My criteria for inclusion is simple: the "detective" has to be gay and the plot must involve a gay milieu.

We are well aware of the immense diversity that exists on the bookstore shelves under the heading of "Mystery". If crosswords are your favorite pastime then you can find a series that allows you to work out puzzles as you solve the murder. Cooking is your forte? Why not whip up the lemon soufflé the cook's severed head was found in (recipe on page 67). Though these examples may appear gimmicky to purists, they point to a fact about this type of literature; you can only dissect the body in so many ways: stabbing, strangulation, drowning, decapitation, poisoning, shooting, and electrocution pretty much covers it.

It is the setting in which the body is found, and the voice that describes the discovery that provide the ingenuity of the crime. This is why lesbian and gay crime fiction is so popular.

The Brandstetter series began in 1970 with the publication of *Fade-out*, and continues to the present with the appearance in 1987 of *The Little Dog Laughed*, the eighth in the series.

The series is penned by Joseph Hansen (who has a couple of non-mystery novels under his belt), and published by Holt Rinehart Winston.

Dave Brandstetter, insurance claims investigator, does the detecting here. The action takes place in various Californian localities which puts it in the West Coast genre of crime stories. Our hero faces the sordid and the seamy; is challenged both morally and ethically. Existential angst is a feature of all of Hansen's novels, particularly in his attempts to maintain continuity in the series, so that Brandstetter's father (who owns an insurance company) dies early in the series as does one of Brandstetter's lovers. This begins to weigh down the series. As Brandstetter grows old, he begins to slow down, becomes a little more

cynical, and as compensation perhaps, takes on a younger black lover (in an ageist, bordering on racist, depiction).

Brandstetter is tall, dark and butch (just the type you hope would show up to sell you insurance, but never does). He takes on nelly lovers who like old movies and interior design. It's not as offensive as it sounds and some of the domestic descriptions are quite sweet. He battles enough homophobes to keep the stories relevant, though he is always trying to save kids in trouble which becomes tedious after a bit.

The series goes downhill after the sixth book. Hansen should probably retire his once engaging detective. If your ideal sleuth is tough but sensitive, and your ideal plots, those that show the darker side of human nature, then Dave Brandstetter is your man.

A recent addition to the California crime sweepstakes is *Body Blows* by Steven Simmons. Put out by Pocket books in 1987, and taking place in the seventies, *Body Blows* asks why we left that decade behind.

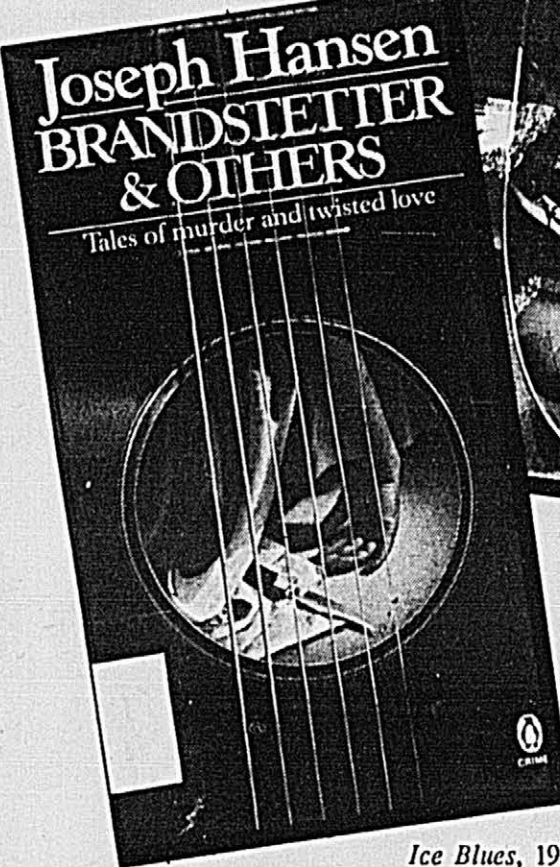
The plot revolves around Cal Lynch, Yale graduate and high-paid hustler, who one night accepts an assignment that turns ugly. The trick turns out to be psychotic. Cal blows him away, in "self-defence". Our "hero" then goes on the lam trying to escape his crime and himself.

True to form, he ends up in his hometown having to face the past. He is also pursued by a hunky dark man (maybe it's Dave Brandstetter) in an attempt to mix the tension of a possible sexual encounter with the possibility he may be a cop out to arrest him. You hope he is and will. Cal Lynch has none of the existential pain that characterizes the traditional West Coast protagonist. Most of the elements are true, but instead of the sense of moral decay infusing the narrative, it is the ennui of one more pair of designer jeans having shrunk to the waist.

Daniel Valentine and Clarisse Lovelace are the sleuths in the Nathan Aldyne quartet of mysteries: *Vermillion* (1980), *Slate* (1984), *Cobalt* (1985), and *Canary* (1986), all published by Avon. They are the Nick and Nora Charles of the eighties, in other words hard-drinking yuppies. He is dark, butch and hunky (had you guessed?); she is dark, tough and sexy. They operate out of Boston's very gay and very trendy South End where, as of the second novel, they

run a gay bar.

Murders seem to happen on their doorstep, usually involving a member of the gay community. Daniel and Clarisse take on the job of figuring out who is doing what to whom without letting those nasty crimes interfere too heavily in their drinking, dishing and cruising. Actually, when the cops arrive, it gives Clarisse a chance to meet some straight men.



The plots involve solving murders within the gay community by sleuths who are members of that community. The police either don't care (as in the case of the death of a hustler in *Vermillion*) or misinterpret the situation because of homophobic assumptions. Daniel and Clarisse, because of their familiarity with the scene, notice incongruous hankie colour combinations and don't immediately leap to the assumption that if someone wears leather they harbour murderous intent.

Here, the cops are definitely the ones who have the least control over events and must rely on insiders to rectify the situation. The setting of the South End and the bar scene gives a real sense of place to the series. It makes clear Daniel and Clarisse's motivation to involve themselves in solving murders: the need to protect one's own and to keep oppressive and uncomprehending external forces out of your territory. This along with witty banter and eccentric secondary characters make up for, at times, less than airtight plots.

Albany, New York, is the home of Richard Stevenson's detective Don Stradley. The series now numbers three: *Death Trick*, 1984, published by Alyson, *On the Other Hand Death*, 1985,

Ice Blues, 1986, both from Penguin.

The Stevenson stories are the closest thing we have to politically correct gay male murder mysteries. He tries so hard to include absolutely all forms of marginalized groups, it becomes somewhat ridiculous.

In *On the Other Hand Death*, you have an old house targeted for demolition by a development firm. The house is owned by an elderly lesbian couple one partner of which has Alzheimer's disease. They are being terrorized because of their refusal to sell. Stradley steps in to save the day. Stevenson is well-meaning and one nice aspect of the novels is that Stradley uses the diversity and close-knitness of the gay community to aid him in his sleuthing. It is a little convenient that he happened to have tricked with all the right people who can gain access to all sorts of information. Just in case we should ever question the necessity of having a well connected gay sleuth, the head of homicide is extremely homophobic, though he learns a grudging respect for our hero. The humor makes up for the occasional lapse in writing style. The most recent contains some particularly funny scenes.

Gorge Baxt is the author of 13 mystery novels, eight of which are currently available,

there are more coming out. Baxt's first, and arguably best, work is *A Queer Kind of Death* (1966) - it was reprinted on its twentieth anniversary and now has a cult following. Its sleuth is Pharoah Love, a black gay police detective who says "Baby Cat" a lot. He appears in two others. No amount of praise can convey the pleasure in reading these books.

When reading his novels, you get a sense of déjà-vu gone wrong. He steals shamelessly from the annals of film and crime fiction but he reworks themes and motifs in such a way that they remain recognizable though deformed, sort of like a friend in a bad accident. There is a joyful lack of ethics and morality in these novels, and there are no clean endings here.

To tell anything is to give it all away. There is little characterization. He is unfairly selective in what he reveals when there is little plot. But all the characters are hilarious, especially the ones that show up for a page. The dialogue that makes up much of the novels is always bitchy and biting. The best of the celebrity series is *The Dorothy Parker Murder Case* in which the Algonquin set meets the Great Gatsby. In this one, as in all others, all the characters careen to an end at a big party-like event which allows him to let chaos reign. It is not to be missed.

This was an attempt at a very quick sketch of some of what is available. By no means could I cover all.

When walking by the mystery section of the bookstore, there is more than the British countryside murder, a second look is warranted (at the books if nothing else).



The lurid lesbian MENACE

After meeting at a posh boarding school, Martha and Mary became friends. Their friendship was disrupted when Rush, A handsome, athletic senior fell for Martha.

by Nairne Holtz

Rush subsequently dumps his current girlfriend (who retaliates by committing suicide) and makes a pass at Martha. When Martha tells Rush she's not "that way", he accuses her of being sexually involved with Mary.

Confused and upset, Martha picks a fight with Mary and tells her that she has slept with a man. Mary responds by losing her virginity to an ugly, older man she met in a park. The man calls Mary "puppy" and "smells of sardines." When Martha finds out what her lie has caused, she punishes herself by going to bed with the man from the park with Mary watching.

Shortly after, the two enter into a sado-masochistic lesbian sex relationship. Their families begin to suspect their lesbianism and try to separate them. The two blackmail, steal and eventually kill Mary's mother in an effort to remain together.

— synopsis of *The Evil Friendship* by Marijane Meaker

Described as "the horrifying yet fascinating novel of two teen-age girls whose unnatural love for each other led to an even greater crime - the crime of matricide," on its back cover, Marijane Meaker's 1957 *The Evil Friendship* is a classic example of the lesbian-as-menace literary genre of the 1950's and 60's. This genre prevailed and flourished in the form of thousands of lurid paperbackbacks such as *Our Furtive Love*, *Prisoner of my Past*, *Girl in the Twilight* or *End of Innocence*.

Homophobia is a recurring presence in these novels. *The Evil Friendship*, ends with the testimony of two psychiatrists spelling out the dangers of lesbianism. In case the reader missed it, the psychiatrists establish a direct link between lesbianism and suicide, sado-masochism, ménage-à-trois, intergenerational sex, crime and murder.

Less blatantly, homophobia is also frequently emphasized in minor ways. Martha nicknames Mary 'Druid' "after the wonderful sacrificial egg (which)...was hatched by the joint labor of several serpents, and was lifted into the air by hissing. The person who caught it had to ride off at full speed, to avoid being stung to death." This passage symbolically connects Mary the Lesbian with the proverbial serpent and

original sin.

The text also contains a number of surprisingly subversive elements, possibly devised to fight male editing and control. Rush gives an almost two-page monologue about men being interested exclusively in themselves and in dominating, rather than loving, women. The novel also gives an unflattering depiction of heterosexuality. The book contains no happy heterosexual relationships or encounters. The relationship between Mary's parents mocks the 1950s prescription of monogamous-het-marriage-in-the-'burbs:

Henry Edlin was putting on his coat in the hallway. "I've not had much luck with novocain on Mrs. Adley either," he was saying, "but that wouldn't bother me if it were a incisor. A bicuspid is another matter altogether."

His wife had come back from the doorway with the morning mail. She said, "There's another one this morning."

"I remember last year I did crown work on her rear molar...."

This description is an obvious, ironic stab at convention.

An interesting element of *The Evil Friendship* is the unsensational depiction of

lesbians. Martha and Mary look just like everyone else. They do not bear a mark of Cain. One reads, "these two teen-age girls came from good families and attended a fine school. To see them...as their families, their friends, their teachers and their neighbors saw them day after day, who could guess...that their lives were intricately enveloped in a web of lust, sadism, lesbianism, masochism and madness?" This portrayal is in line with the 1950s dogma that one has to fear one's own abnormality, sexual desires, homosexuality or communist sympathies rather than fear social structures or institutions.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, Meaker wrote sensational paperbackbacks under the pen names Vin Packer and Ann Aldritch. Her Vin Packer novels had titles such as *The Young and Violent*, *Whisper His Sin*, *The Dark Intruder* and *5:45 to Suburbia*. They dealt with the theme of hidden, twisted aspects of an otherwise middle class, WASP existence. Grier, and other theorists, have described

Packer and Ann Aldritch novels as reaching high levels of homophobia.

In 1970, Meaker, using the name Ann Aldritch, published a non-fiction, pro-lesbian essay entitled 'Take a Lesbian to Lunch'. In 1973, she published *Shockproof* Sydney Skate under her own name. This novel is a sympathetic portrayal of a young, male heterosexual teenager with a lesbian mother.

During the late 1970s and 1980s, Meaker published her best known novels, a series of teen fiction books under the pen name M.E. Kerr. In one novel, *I'll Love You When You're More Like Me*, the narrator's best friend is a gay male. Several of the novels have lesbian undertones, the strongest relationships are between women. In *Love is a Missing Person*, one of the teenage heroines seems like a typical dyke — her name is Chicago, she wears mens clothes, has her hair cut very short, rides a motorbike and tries out for the football team. Chicago scandalizes the town when she chooses a black man for a lover.

Meaker's novels of the '50s and '60s were typical of lesbian menace fiction.

However, other writers contributed somewhat less homophobic works to this field and have since come out as lesbians. They include Paula Christian, Ann Bannon, Valerie Taylor, Barbara Grier and Marian Zimmer Bradley. In the 1980s, Christian published a new lesbian novel. Along with Bannon and Taylor, Christian has had a number of her earlier novels reprinted by Naiad press.

Christian's *The Other Side of Desire*, published in 1965, is another example of the lesbian menace genre. The plot is straightforward. Carrie, an ex-lesbian, has married and lives happily with her husband and two children in the suburbs. However, she can not sexually respond to her spouse. At thirty-four, she takes a part time job doing door-to-door surveys and meets Kim, a bored, hard-drinking housewife. The two begin an affair. Kim, shallow, bored and narcissistic, does not love Carrie and refuses to leave the financial security of her husband for Carrie. The two break

up and Carrie returns to her husband. The dilettante dyke who has an affair and returns to her husband was a common figure in lesbian menace novels for it adhered to a heterosexist, patriarchal ideology: lesbianism is only sexual, a form of 'kicks.'

But, in *The Other Side of Desire*, Christian emphasizes that Carrie is not rejecting lesbianism as much as she is rejecting Kim as a person and, perhaps, to a lesser extent, the insecurity of being openly gay. This is the beginning of a political vision which locates the oppressor as society or in society, rather than in the self. This concept is in tune with the 1960s critique of American ideas, structures and institutions.

Christian avoids obvious patriarchal ideology by the fact that Carrie does not stop being attracted to women and does not learn to respond sexually to her husband. She rejects the heterosexist axiom, "all any dyke needs is a good lay."

Christian concludes, "Carrie did not for a moment think that she would never again be attracted to another woman....(but) she would have to accept herself and control her emotions with understanding rather than fear - as she had for the past eleven years - face her gayness like a diabetic faces his strenuous diet." This view is not without homophobic prejudice but it is an improvement on lesbianism-leads-to-matricide.

Like Meaker, Christian includes a number of subversive elements. One such element is realistic sex scenes. Christian builds up sexual tension between the two women and gives explicit, accurate descriptions of what they do in bed. She uses words such as "vagina" and "breasts" and avoids the grossly exaggerated, slang style of straight male porn.

A second subversive element is Carrie's pseudo-politicization. She becomes furious with Kim for saying homosexuality is followed by collapse in society and for saying racist and classist things about her Puerto Rican neighbours.

A third element is Carrie's occasionally misandrous (man-hating) thoughts. Normally, she is Miss Goody Two Shoes who describes her spouse in glowing terms. She calls him, "a treasure in a

husband....a good provider with initiative, careful in his clothes and manners, soft spoken, educated (not especially cultured, but educated) and never underfoot."

But when Carrie discovers her husband has an extra-marital sex life, she thinks,

"Show me a man and I'll show you a skull full of semen...that's all any man is." When Carrie meets a man who is making a pass at her girlfriend, she can't understand how Kim puts up with him and has "a disgusting image of Dick Kingsley unzipping his fly and peeing all over the furniture. He'd have a long skinny penis, she just knew it, and probably just one ball too."

Although this novel contains subversive elements, they are minimal. Some merely reflect the more acceptable social ideas during the 1960s (e.g. civil rights issues). Christian's portrait of a lesbian bar and Greenwich Village gays and lesbians is grim and unflattering. She makes especially negative comments about gay men and is somewhat preoccupied with keeping her son from being a homosexual. And ultimately, Carrie dumps her "bad girl" lover to stay with her "good guy" hubby. Christian continues to blame the instability and destructiveness of lesbian love on its ontology rather than society's homophobia.

The prevalence of pseudonyms in lesbian menace novels often mask the true

gender and sexual orientation of the author. However, one can usually pinpoint the author's sex and sexuality by closely reading the text. Variations in themes and style occur depending upon whether the author is a straight man, a het woman or a dyke.

The 1961 novel *Commit the Sins*, features action, lack of dialogue (making one of the main characters a deaf-mute does not just serve the purpose of increasing the book's perversity), Korean war stories and minimal foreplay and tension in the sex scenes. These factors peg the author, William Austin, as a straight male. Lesbian authors tend more towards self-hatred (e.g. "I'm continued on page 16





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**Black achievement
compares well**

To the Daily

In the article "Scaling the educational ladder," (Jan 28, 1988) the assertion is made that "Blacks in Canada greatly underachieve in the public educational system..." and that "Blacks are stranded at the bottom of the educational ladder."

In fact, this is not the case. The educational profile of Canadian Blacks compares well with that of all Canadians.

Data from the Royal Commission *Equality in Employment Vol. 1*, October 1984, demonstrate clearly that Black educational achievement, measured by highest degree earned, is fairly high.

For example, in all Canada, according to the 1981 census, 9.9 per cent of Canadian males had a university degree and 20 per cent completed less than grade 9. For Black males the comparable figures are 13.7 and 9.7. This superior educational profile for Blacks moreover, is not an artifact of the selective immigration process in Canada which has favoured educated Blacks (as indeed it has).

Another government study of census data, by multiculturalism Canada, March, 1986, found that while Canadian born Blacks did have a slightly lower educational attainment than immigrant Blacks, they still compared well with the Canadian average. For all Canadians, (males and females) 16 per cent had at least some university education and 20 per cent less than grade 9; for Canadian-born Blacks, the figures are 17 and only 16 per cent.

This does not mean that there is no racism in Canada, or in our educational system. Far from it. (Although my own view is that the educational sector is among the least racist sectors of our society). There may be growing numbers of Black youngsters who are now doing poorly, and who will show up in educational profiles of future years. But we should be wary of unconsciously accepting and perpetuating stereotypes not based on evidence.

Thus even the well-meaning Daily report, and others like it, unwittingly sustain the arguments of racist believers in the intellectual inferiority of Blacks. Moreover, there is the danger that such erroneous reports may become self-fulfilling prophecies, discouraging Black students from achieving up to their true potential.

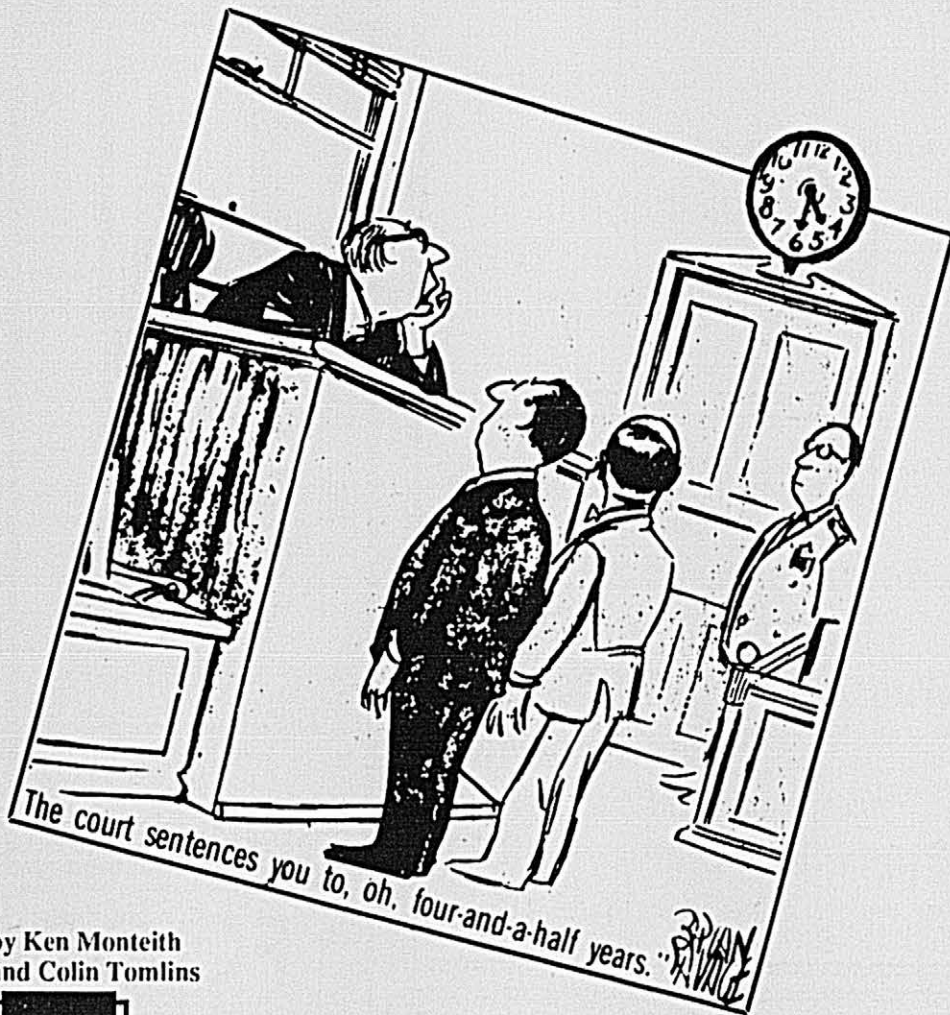
Morton Weinfeld
Associate Chair
Dept. of Sociology**Well done Redpath staff**

To the Daily

Bravo to the Redpath staff for their delightfully colourful and macabre display on vampires, werewolves and other things horrible. The taxidermized bats were a really nice touch. What ever inspired such a humorous, unacademic exhibition? Keep up such welcome diversions.

Shari Moldel
U4 Law

Legal reform: a long, long time coming



by Ken Monteith
and Colin Tomlins

Of all the absurdities which typify Canadian criminal law, the rules governing consensual homosexual activity have stood out in the minds of many as being, as well as unenforceable, completely unjustifiable.

Until January 1 of this year, all homosexual acts were characterized as acts of "gross indecency"—outrages against the public. Contrary to popular belief, the reforms enacted in 1969 did not legalize homosexual activity. Indeed, Sections 155 and 157 of the *Criminal Code* stated that:

"Everyone who commits buggery or bestiality is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for fourteen years." and "Every one who commits an act of gross indecency with another person is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for five years."

It was only the proviso of Section 158 of the code, stating that sections 155 and 157 did not apply to acts committed in private between a "husband and his wife" or any two persons aged twenty-one or more, both of whom (in both cases) consent to the commission of the act, that permitted the existence of homosexual activity without it being actively criminal.

The *Criminal Code*, as it stood, left us in the position of being pseudo-criminals. We would be permitted to engage in certain forms of activity, but only with the under-

standing that such activity was a very marked departure from the norms expected of average (i.e. decent) Canadians. We existed, as it were, on their sufferance. We could express our emotional and sexual needs, but only if we made certain that we were hiding this fact.

Artificial distinctions in the age of consent laws prohibited any homosexual activity unless both participants were over the age of 21—this as opposed to the heterosexual norms permitting sex outside of marriage as early as 14 in particular circumstances, and no restrictions after age 18.

Such legally enshrined distinctions must be understood in light of the history of legal discrimination, both ecclesiastical and secular, against same sex activity.

Of Church and State

Prohibitions against same-sex activity are found in Mosaic law, but were not, in the early part of the Christian era, commonly part of Christian dogma. The Church Fathers did not consider themselves bound by Old Testament law.

Indeed, John Boswell, in his book *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (reviewed in the *Daily*, Volume 72, #66) points out that homosexuals often occupied positions of wealth and power and enjoyed a high degree of social tolerance. Several factors led to the demise of this period. Most important among these were: attempts to consolidate Christian Ecclesiastical power; reaction to the expansion of the Moorish empire; and the rise of

European nationalisms. These phenomena arose in a relatively short period of time—between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries—and gave rise to intense feelings of intolerance for those who were in any way different from the mainstream (i.e. who were non-heterosexual and/or non-Christian).

A large part of this intolerance was an attempt to differentiate Europeans from what was viewed as permissiveness on the part of Moorish society at the time. The consolidation of authority within the church, accompanied by movements towards theological conformity gave rise to accusations of heresy and to the Inquisition. Re-interpretations of passages in the Bible now invoked as prohibitions against homosexuality² and the heated debate surrounding the issue of clerical marriage made the position of homosexuals within the church less than comfortable. The equation of homosexuality with heresy, for various reasons, gave rise to the term "buggery" in the description of homosexual activity. The 'sinful' status of homosexual activity was officially effected in England by ecclesiastical legislation in 1102.

The first record of death as a secular penalty prescribed for the 'sin against nature' in Medieval Europe comes from mid-thirteenth century Castile; other European jurisdictions were not long in introducing similar measures. The 'sin' carrying the death penalty entered the secular law of England at the time when Henry VIII was engaged in severing the Church of England from Rome and expanding the jurisdiction of the secular courts to include those areas previously the province of ecclesiastical tribunals. The mixture of religious and secular law with the concept of divine law as the basis of state power gave rise to the notion of homosexuality as treason, a further justification for its prohibition. The statutory prohibition of homosexuality in England underwent repeal under Mary and re-enactment under Elizabeth, and thence remained in force until 1828. The death penalty for the crime, in Britain, was abolished in 1861.

The Canadian context

After Confederation, the new Dominion of Canada set about consolidating the colonial criminal laws, and in 1869 enacted its Act Respecting Offences Against the Person. The Act punished the "abominable crime of buggery" with a maximum of life imprisonment and a minimum of two years. This law, like almost all Canadian criminal law, was adopted almost piecemeal from the British body of law. The offence of "gross indecency," added to the English criminal law by an ill-considered amendment in 1885, was also adopted by the Canadian parliament, applying only to activity between males and prescribed a penalty of five years' imprisonment and whipping. Both of these offences were incorporated in the 1892 codification of the criminal law and remained unchanged, except as to section numbering, until the revision of the *Criminal Code* in 1954.

The 1954 revisions brought about three significant changes to the laws governing homosexual activity: 1) the maximum penalty for "buggery" was reduced to fourteen years' imprisonment; 2) whipping was eliminated as a part of the punishment for "gross indecency"; and 3) the gender-specific language which had characterized the offence of "gross indecency" since its advent was replaced with general language. This last change is of particular importance, because it represented the criminalization of female homosexual behaviour, not previously considered criminal—or, as Queen Victoria is said to have believed, even possible.

The Wolfenden Committee and the beginnings of reform

Around the same time as the revisions of the Canadian code, the English established the Wolfenden Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution, which recommended abolition of the offences of "buggery" and "gross indecency" when practised in private between consenting adults aged 21 and more. While discussion of reform was taking place in England, the situation in Canada was becoming worse. In 1961 an act was passed permitting the designation of persons convicted of certain offences, including "buggery" and "gross indecency," as "Dangerous Sexual Offenders," subjecting them to indefinite detention.³

Organized protest against the state of the law arose in Canada in the mid-1960s, and was finally successful in effecting amendment of the law in 1969. The change created an exception to the two offences operating in favour of "a husband and his wife" or any two persons aged 21 or more, for consensual acts committed in private.

The present

On June 23, 1987, the House of Commons gave third reading to *Criminal Code* amendments which will significantly address the gross inequalities that have existed under the laws of this country with respect to homosexual activity. These amendments, which came into force on January 1, 1988, have eliminated the "gross indecency" offence.

Age of consent has, with one important exception, been equalized on a new tier system. (The tier system attempts to address disparities in age and power rather than strictly defining a point before which sexuality is forbidden). The important exception regards the new provision regarding anal intercourse. The archaic and emotionally laden term "buggery" has been eliminated, but a seemingly arbitrary decision states that anal intercourse is not permissible before the age of 18. This echoes the prohibition against "buggery," and must be viewed in light of the findings of the aforementioned Wolfenden Committee. In their final report, the Committee said their option to recommend retention of "buggery" as a separate offence was based solely on their perception of public moral opinion.

Like much of Canadian criminal law, prohibitions against homosexual activity existed on the basis of tradition, not some rational moral position. It can easily be argued that the only reason such prohibitions entered the body of law was the misguided need of European society to draw distinctions between itself and Moorish civilization. Justifications along those lines have a place waiting for them in the dustbin of history.

- 1) The concept of "gross indecency" was not defined in the *Criminal Code*. Courts, concerned with the need for certainty in law, moved to provide a definition for the term. The definition most widely accepted to date is: "...a very marked departure from the decent conduct expected of the average Canadian in the circumstances that... existed."
- 2) The traditional Christian view of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah had been that those cities were destroyed for the inhospitality of their citizenry; inaccuracies in translation seem to have contributed to the espousal of what is now the popular view of the story.
- 3) The inclusion of "buggery" and "gross indecency" as offences within the possible preview of "Dangerous Sexual Offender" status continued until it was amended in January 1983.



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
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



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Your old lady's queer

by Elizabeth McCormick

TO MY DAUGHTER

If I could take your child hand in mine,
And lead you down your path,
If I could shield your eyes from the ugliness there,
If I could wrap a cloak around you
So neither cold, nor rain, could enter in,

If I could build a world for you with loving,
then not a better world would be found.

But these are not the things I owe you,
Nor are they mine to give,
For in an hour of happy pain,
I gave you your freedom from my womb,
And screaming, you took it,
And with it a life to lead as your own.

I wrote these words during my pregnancy. I was 18, idealistic, and with women's intuitiveness, knew the child I carried was a female. (There were no tests for sex typing then.)

It was also before I realized I was a lesbian. The first nine years of my daughter's life were typical of most children's in a small town in the 70s. She was happy, bright, well loved. Mom was a Sunday School teacher, heavily involved in community work, and just slightly neurotic. Dad was a good man, hard working, kind, and often not there. It was better that way.

Then IT happened. I fell in love with my friend, the woman next

door. I came out, and created what was the equivalent of a small atomic explosion. The woman I fell in love with had a son, and too often the fall out from that explosion landed directly on our children.

That period in my life was one of confusion, pain, and wild joy. I confess that my parenting skills at that point were hit and miss. Dr. Spock does not cover the problem of what to do when your lesbian identity surges to the forefront, being in a passionate love relationship for the first time, while your husband threatens death, or worse, having your child taken away from you. Indeed the fallout was powerful and painful.

Secrecy in a small town is often impossible, and my new-found self, my love, and my joy refused to be hidden. I lost my job, and was relieved of my duties as a community volunteer. My daughter, Anne, became aware that some of her friends were no longer allowed to visit at her house, and my family began to disappear from our lives. It was necessary to move away, and begin a new life for all of us.

My lover and I, our children, two

cats and a dog moved in together in a new city, and we learned to live as a family.

Yes, we were a family, and a happy one. Our children grew to love one another and the new adult in their lives. But we were more than a family, we were a self-created structure, with no guidelines, no support, and very alone.

There were no groups for lesbian mothers at the time, and the other lesbians we knew did not have children. I missed the get-togethers with other mothers, the child-talk and coffee. There were no winter clothes handed down and passed around. There was no one to call at three a.m. from the hospital emergency room when the fever went too high, and the fears climbed with it.

My lover and I leaned more and more upon each other, weakening our relationship. Even the strongest beam will bend under too much pressure. We needed input and support. The good times were wonderful, birthdays, Christmases, achievements, and sorrows were shared lovingly. But love cannot shield forever.

"How do I explain this? I mean, where do I say we all sleep?" That was the first question from Anne that burst my bubble. My reaction was, "It's no one's business where I sleep!" Although this was true, I was avoiding Anne's problem. I was crawling into my own defences.

Whenever friends, teachers, or any outsider, would question her as to the relationship of the people living in her household she had no acceptable answers. Who were we, and what would happen if others knew were big questions in her life,

and still are. (It's for these sorts of reasons that I can't use my own name to tell this story. Elizabeth McCormick exists to protect us.)

I believe her personal feelings on my lesbian lifestyle are positive. I know she feels badly about her fears, feeling that she is hurting me or my lover somehow, and sometimes she does.

Gay liberation has not hit the high schools. The taunt, "You queer", strikes deeply into the psyche of gays' and lesbians' children. Children are not given choices in determining the lifestyle of their parents, yet they must live them and all it involves. So how do we ease our children's way?

I think the crucial element is support. We must first understand the fears, admit to them, and respect them. This can be painful, reliving your own fears, those you fought so hard to put behind you.

Groups for lesbian mothers are beginning to form. Thank God (Goddess)! Here lies the basic support systems for lesbians and their families. They are vital. Our children will learn to be free, and to feel pride through that nucleus.

I hope these groups are a nucleus, because it is time for more gay men and lesbians to become more involved in the care and upbringing of our children. Lesbian mothers and gay fathers need the understanding and support from the gay and lesbian community at large. If we can gain strength in our own community, get the funding we need for facilities, and the recognition that our children feel that their families too have the right to exist.

We need the power to begin lobbying for recognition in the school system, for the right to be a family in the eyes of the social service agencies and the welfare system. We need to be seen, and our children need to know we are many.

The future belongs to the children. All children.



Lesbian rearing support

by Mitu Sengupta

The lack of child-rearing services available to lesbian mothers has led to the creation of a lesbian parent support group in Montréal. Feline Families hopes to expand its mandate and provide Montréal lesbians with greater parental support within the next few years.

"The needs of lesbian mothers and their children are similar to those of heterosexual mothers, except that lesbian mothers are also faced with their children getting harassed by people in school and neighbourhoods for having an 'abnormal' family environment," said Tracey*, Feline Families Co-Ordinator.

"Our most important concern is that our children not be isolated from other children," she added. Feline Families and other lesbian support groups allow children of lesbian mothers to meet other children in the same position as themselves. "It's very important for our children to understand the family

environment they live in, and that this environment works and should not be isolating," said Tracey.

Feline Families conducts planned activities such as swimming, video nights, and other family sports for children and their mothers. The group makes use of a gym, a recreation centre and a café.

Feline Families is almost entirely financially supported by its co-ordinators. A café has provided them with free space to hold meetings and other activities. Project Lavender, a Montréal lesbian caucus, publishes Feline Families' upcoming activities in their bulletins. A community clinic also contributes to the group's finances. Tracey hopes a larger membership will increase outside support. The group also plans to ask City of Montréal services for help.

According to Tracey, most of the women involved in the programme had come out to their children. She added that discussion sessions are an important part of the group's programmes. "The discussion sessions provide both mothers and their children with the opportunity

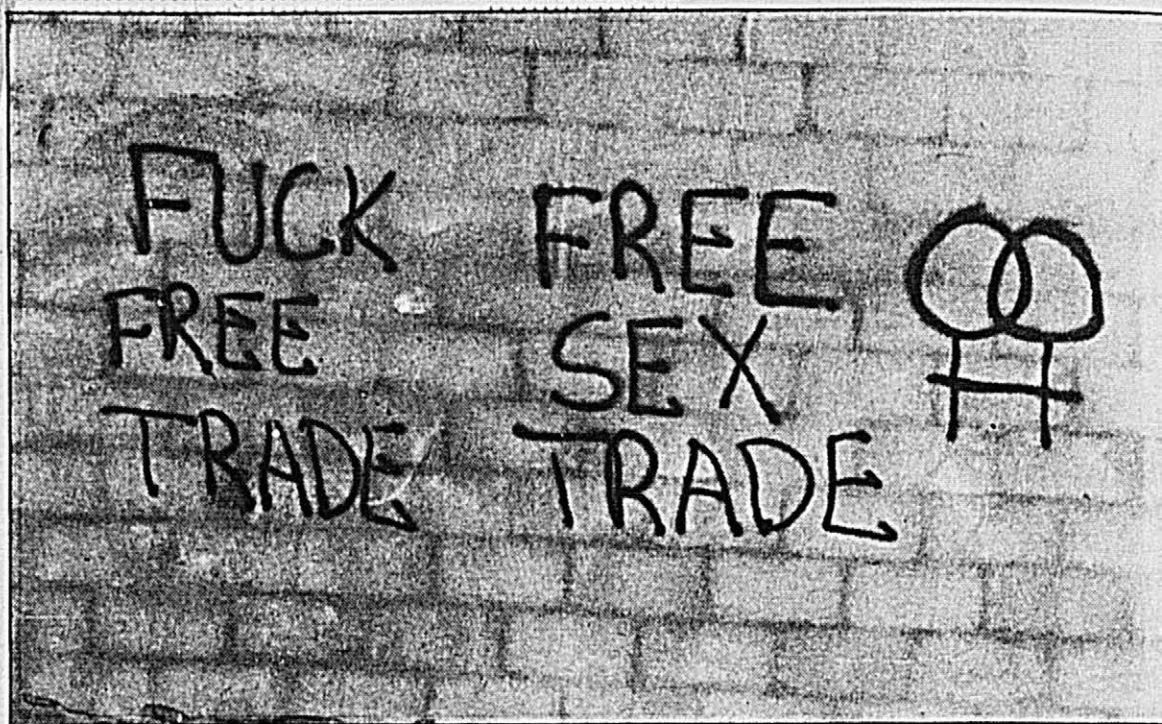
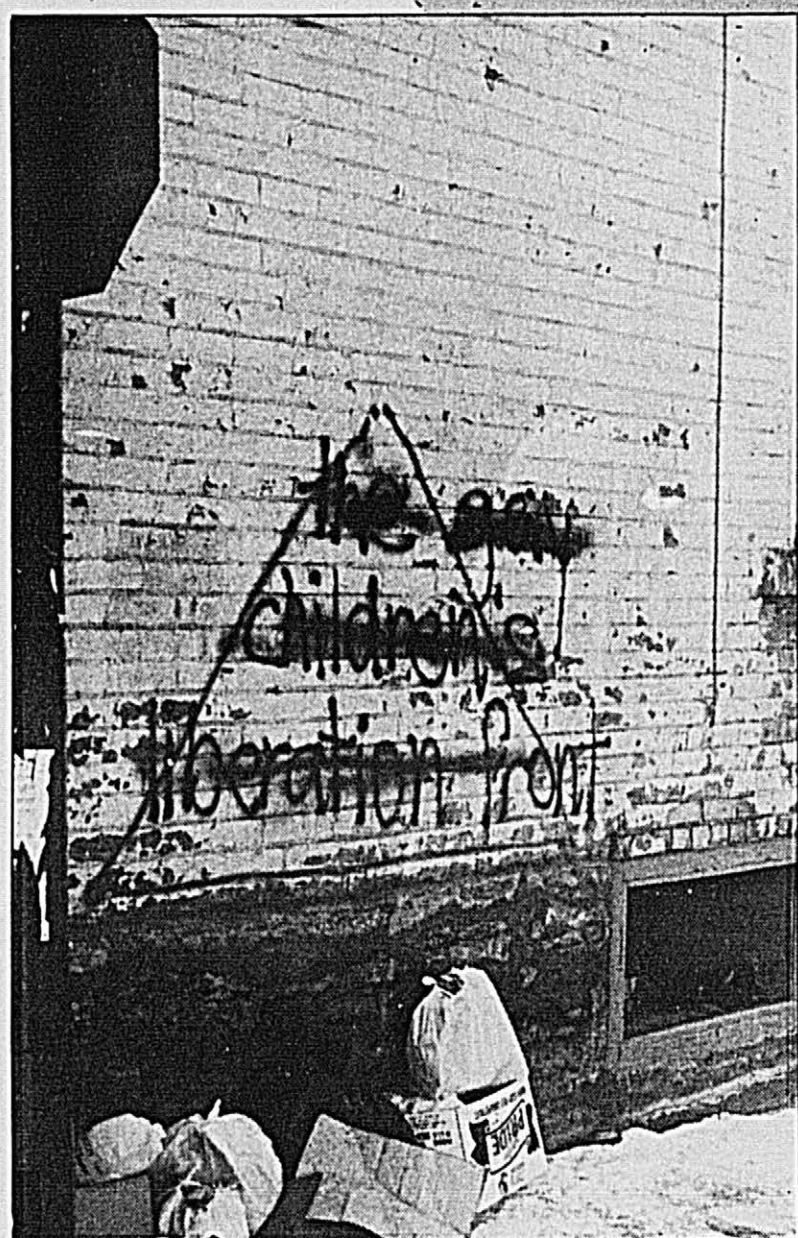
to speak out openly about their family situations," she said.

Feline Families encourages lesbians considering parenthood to come to them for advice and support. "These women should know what they are getting into and should be aware of the difficulties they may have to face if they want to raise their children," said Tracey, "our group is here to help them make the best possible decisions."

"The biggest problem we face is people's negative reactions to what we are trying to achieve," she said. "In the past, organizers of lesbian groups have been harassed by neighbourhood people." Yet Feline Families has not faced many problems concerning this since its formation. "We've only just started," Tracey said, "if all goes well, Feline Families can become an important city-wide community service group."

For further information about Feline Families, call (514) 935-5881.

*Due to possible future harassment, Tracey requested a pseudonym be used.



Fag folk: Does disco suck?

BY DON ROSSITER

Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.

-Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*

Life's about dancin' and fuckin'.

-James Brown

Disco is a prime social mover. It came out of the closet, on to the radio, and into the public realm along with the community that brought it to prominence. Somewhere between the thump and wail, lies a rich underpinning of liberation theory.

The content of modern day "dance music" is a good indicator of the state of the gay community. Given its diversification and assimilation, the dance floor is one of the community's few gathering points.

The 70's disco heyday introduced most of the characteristics which moulded this flourishing genre- strong bass rhythms, simple, often repetitive lyrics, and the influence of new electronic instrumental technology. The setting was also important. The dance floor was a temple of sexual liberation, hedonism and emotional catharsis. The gay community had finally found a meeting place. And, since being gay is largely about being sexual, dancing proved a natural and legal public outlet.

"Oppression can turn people into dreamers, make them stage mental plays of revenge, triumph or ecstatic reconciliation: it produces actors conscious of the exact nuance of feigned behaviour."

(Edmund White, *States of Desire*)

Disco songs show a distinct tendency towards two main lyrical streams: dancing as a sexual pursuit, and pained, "you done me wrong", emotional diatribes. The use of dance as a sexual metaphor is probably the most common. Although deceptively vapid and repetitive, it provides a simple, accessible

pretext for the communication of oppressed sexual desire. Everybody knows the songs are not about dancing, and the parties involved are not assigned particular genders. The lyrics are interpretative anthems for activities not easily verbalized, least of all in polite, straight society. These are songs about "pushin' in the bushes," ("Do[fin'] it 'til your satisfied") where libidos are likened to ringing bells.

The songs of a love denied and a love wronged have always existed, from the advent of torchy blues songs to country & western hurtin' ballads. Disco gave these songs heightened frenzy, a grander scale and a renewed intensity. These songs carry a subtext of their own, one of private/public anguish bordering on political outcry.

The songs, usually sung by women, document a theatrical emotional response to a love that is unrequited and the subsequent affirmation which overcomes these obstacles. The lyrics mask the hurt and struggle of the protagonist, couching it in over-romanticized sassy bravado and, often, rage.

The writing is on the WALL

PHOTOS BY ANDREW FISHER



*Aren't you the one that tried to hurt me with
goodbye,
think I'd crumble, think I'd lay down and die,
Oh no, not I, I will survive,
Just as long as I know how to love I know I'll
stay alive,
I've got all my life to live, I've got all my love
to give,
and I'll survive, I will survive...
-Gloria Gaynor, I Will Survive*

Another notable characteristic is the roster of 'divas' which the music assembled. These artists (most of whom are black) are strong, sexual and often sexually ambiguous singers who carry the torch and the message. Grace Jones, Divine, Donna Summer, and the current diva, Madonna, all gained initial prominence in the gay discos where their music was introduced. These women sang to their men, allowing for convenient gender reversal come chorus time. Social, political and sexual movements meshed and messages of gay and female sexuality, black power, and sexual diversity recur in disco's catch-phrases: "I am what I am", "Do it anyway you wanna do it" and "I'm comin' out".

Disco's greatest strength is its blatant quality. Just as it makes little effort to conceal its unabashed sexual overtones, it thrusts its gayness into the forefront. Legions of straights tittered with knowing hipness at the fact they 'got' the Village People. Hence, *macho* was forever displaced as a comfortable

male posture, while the 'Y' and orgies became synonymous. Disco and the dance revolution brought straights into gay society, if only for a night of fun, luring them with the promises of glamour and sexual abandon. It offered a glimpse, at least in part, into a community which had been marginalized and disparate up to this point, relishing in its self-absorption and social/sexual awakening.

The 80's homo has little political motivation. Greater acceptance, sexual prudence, general conservatism and a strong desire to fit in like the rest have disenfranchised younger gay men from the collective "differentness" of ghettos and clones past. Disco has changed with the gay community.

A general public homophobia, upon the discovery of the music's roots, has maligned disco. Disco has no pretensions, none of the heady, politically-correct appeal which turns intellectuals into arm-chair activists. It is now popularly considered 'faggy' and trashy. Racist tendencies, considering disco's Black roots, have not helped matters.

*Pushed around and kicked around, always the
lonely boy,
you were the one they'd talk about around
town as they put you down,
and as hard as they would try, they'd hurt to
make you cry, but you'd never cry to them, just
to your soul...
cry, boy, cry
-Bronski Beat, Smalltown Boy*

Disco has now taken on the euphemistic term 'dance music'. The same messages, however, are apparent, but with a pronounced sense of cynicism. The advent of "Doom and Depression Disco" reflects serious ills within the gay community. Although many of these present day purveyors are gay, their collective voices are negative and whiny. Gay dance bands seem to waver between the closeted, self-hating Pet

Shop Boys ("It's a Sin", "What've I Done to Deserve This?"), and the activist, but self-pitying Bronski Beat. Others, like the popular Depeche Mode, come off as precious trons of dissatisfaction, mixing seductive electro-beat with burps of silent protest.

These new groups have, however, revived interest in the dance floor, by attracting a new young crowd. Today's technopettes fling their arms and thrust their hips with controlled, affected posturing. Shrieks, and shirtless prancing are out (big time). These are vestiges of a former sub-culture, one bearing little resemblance to their new reality. Besides, *they* were the ones who created present difficulties. Now it's all about attitude and pout, looking too hip to be human. Some of these bands have even taken to re-doing the oldies, another unfortunate 80's malaise, simply succeeding in adding a measure of sterility and soullessness.

Only the recent barrage of the hybrid disco/funk 'House Music' provides much of an uplift, urging its ecstatic dancers to jack, move and pump their bodies. "House" emerged from the black, gay clubs of Chicago—endless remixes of basic rhythm tracks which sprung from a burgeoning cult of D.J. This tough new dance music has also created a new roster of starlets, ones that speak with a gritty street rap, all lip and liberation.

Although it is becoming increasingly an overstatement, gay bars and clubs "play the roles performed for other groups by family and church" (Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality and its Discontents*). They encourage a collective and public identity, a consciousness that continues to politicize. The synergism of disco has proven a seductive cultural wave.



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Wednesday, March 2.

Gary Kinsman, author of *The Regu-
lation of Desire*, to speak on *The
Regulation of Sexuality: Towards a
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425-426.

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Sing if you're
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Daily Publications Society:

Notice of referendum

March 9, 10 and 11 the follow-
ing two amendments to the DPS
constitution will be presented in
a referendum:

Question 1:

Clause 7.1) Upon registration at
the university, every member of
the Publications Society shall
pay a fee to the Publications
Society in an amount to be de-
termined by the Board of
Directors. Any increase in the
fee shall be subject to ratifica-
tion by a simple majority of the
Publications Society's mem-
bers voting in a referendum on
that question....

Amend to read: Any increase of
more than five per cent shall be
subject to ratification by a
simple majority of the Publica-
tions Society's members voting
in a referendum on that ques-
tion.

Question 2:

Clause 10.4.2) Not less than 15
per cent of the membership of
the Publications Society shall
have cast a vote in a referendum
for it to be binding upon the
Publication Society and the
Board of Directors.

Amend to read: Quorum for any
referendum shall be ten per cent
of the membership of the Publi-
cations Society.

Gay and lesbian media after the Body Politic

by Iain Blair

Assailed from outside the community as perverted trash and maligned from within as a misguided example of middle class yuppie journalism, *The Body Politic* published for the last time in February of 1987.

After seventeen years as the chronicle of the Canadian gay/lesbian community's victories, defeats, schisms and solidarity, a fatigued and restless editorial collective finally shut the paper down despite objections from the community.

As one despondent former collective member wrote in the very last letters section, "The Body Politic was not your private property to dispose of. It belonged to all of us."

As one despondent former collective member wrote in the very last letters section, "The Body Politic was not your private property to dispose of. It belonged to all of us."

But the BP terminated itself, and Canada's gay and lesbian communities were left without a comprehensive national forum and voice.

In the late 1980s, lesbian and gay journalism in Canada is in many ways indicative of the political and geographical nature of the nation itself. Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver each have several distinctive gay journals which reflect their large and diverse sexual minority populations. Ottawa, surprisingly, also produces some notable publi-

cations.

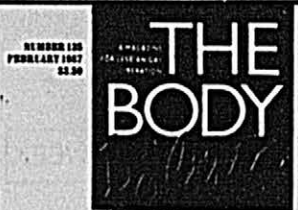
Yet in general, gays and lesbians in the rest of Canada are unfortunately silent. Leaflets like the *Newsletter of Winnipeg Gay/Lesbian Youth* are encouraging signs of activity. Groups of Prairie Gays and Lesbian Farmers across the country create similar newsletters to help establish an identity. Yet these newsletters cannot really be called newspapers and journals, which in Canada are the products only of the large urban gay meccas. Canadian cities also have an extensive feminist media which assumes many of the concerns of the lesbian community.

In Québec, of the several magazines which crowd the market, *Sortie* is undoubtedly the best read and the glossiest. Specifically a men's magazine, its professional format

healthy industry. But these journals make little effort to network or communicate with similar publications in English Canada. Québec's homosexual media maintains a state of *de facto* independence.

Over the border in Ontario, Ottawa produces *GO (Gay Ottawa) Info*, an impressively complete gay and lesbian community paper which is all the more laudable given the size of Ottawa's gay community. Unfortunately the paper is quite local in scope and, sorry to say, a bit dry. None of the news stories or dated cultural reviews leap off the page at you, and a layout and graphics course could come in handy. Ottawa also gives us *Lesbian Fury/Furie Lesbienne*, a bilingual publication which quite forcefully makes clear that its stories are for the eyes of women alone and that men should back off. Therefore, out of respect for the publisher's political stand, I won't review it.

Toronto is, of course, still haunted by the ghost of the BP and last year's new, glossy magazine, *Epicene*, which folded after only a few issues. The BP didn't provide an easy act to follow, but *Epicene* never clearly defined its market and aims. What remains in Toronto is *Rites* and *Xtra*. *Rites* bills itself as a liberation paper. It does admittedly have a comprehensive political viewpoint and an interest in printing gay and lesbian news stories (terse as they sometimes might be) from around the world. As a journal it is concerned with sexual liberation of all kinds,



NUMBER 126
FEBRUARY 1987
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THE BODY

Take off, eh?
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No day in court
John Darnley dies at 53,
his case still unresolved

This is how it began. Two years after Stonewall, a bunch of people got together to start a small gay tabloid. They didn't really know how to do it. But in a moment that felt fresh and exciting and new, anything seemed possible. They just knew they wanted to. What they made was brash, inspiring, pig-headed - and vital. It touched more people than they could have imagined in 1971. And it lived for fifteen years. This is how it ends.

**The farewell issue of
The Body Politic**

and was frequently a thorn in the side of a BP portrayed as the journal of bourgeois sell-outs. Yet the political evangelism of *Rites* can be as annoying as it is refreshing, for theories of social constructionism and Marxist class struggle are applied liberally to each issue, and it sometimes seems that theory takes precedence over intellectual rigour.

Xtra, Toronto's other gay mag, shows a crosstown gay sensibility. Although each bimonthly issue includes several valuable pieces on politics, health, and sex, *Xtra* is primarily a cultural paper. It is an 'about town' listing of Toronto events and gossip splashed liberally through catchy layouts and pages of advertisements—eminently readable, but not really for those unfamiliar with Toronto. The future appears brighter, however, as *Xtra* has affiliated itself with a West Coast group, forming a partnership somewhat pretentiously

Angles, Vancouver's other and older monthly publication, also has a large circulation (10,000) and it is admirably politically correct. The Editorial Statement of Principles should be taped above every gay politico's bed. *Angles* also has a significant lesbian content and is generally a satisfying read both in terms of information and presentation. There is another Vancouver monthly planned for the spring, this one specifically for and by Lesbians. Perhaps the recent pressures of the rightist provincial Socreds are pushing Vancouver's gay/lesbian community into renewed activism.

But despite the productivity of these four urban metropolises of Canadian gay life, there is still something missing. Gone, it seems, are the days when anyone in the country could read tales of the injustices suffered by lesbian mothers in the Yukon, or personal accounts of what it's like to be a man in

Angles, Vancouver's other and older monthly publication, is admirably politically correct. The Editorial Statement of Principles should be taped above every gay politico's bed.

Lesbian and gay film festival

by David Shannon

It has been claimed that there is no such thing as gay cinema. But if the efforts of Pierre Chackal, Rene Lavoie and Patricia Kearns are any indication, gay cinema is thriving.

Grouping themselves under the banner of Diffusions gaies et lesbiennes du Québec these three directors have pooled their energies to present the gay film festival, *Images et Nations Lesbiennes et Gais*. The Festival will take place April 19-30, 1988.

"We've been overwhelmed by the amount of paperwork required for charitable status and corporate and government funding. In fact, we have someone filling out forms full-time," said Chackal.

While studying chemistry two years ago at Université de Montréal, Chackal acted on a friend's suggestion and put together a series of eight gay films entitled *Popcorn Rose*. Chackal said organizing this series "was a nightmare." He took on every detail of graphics, financing, and programming alone, and miraculously broke even. "I learned the process from making mistakes," he said.

While Chackal was busy with *Popcorn Rose*, Lavoie organized *Gais à L'Ecran*, a week of gay films at the Cinémathèque Québécoise. Lavoie's filmmaking

went smoother than Chackal's because of the theatre's cooperation. The Cinémathèque was pleased with the capacity crowds it attracted.

Lavoie and Chackal met soon after the release of *Gais à L'Ecran* and began to lay down the foundations for this year's festival with Kearns.

Kearns joined to take charge of lesbian programming, as the first two festivals were completely gay male in content.

According to Chackal, Kearns has had two major problems in organizing the lesbian films. "First, there is less choice (though not less quality) in women's films. Then, there has been difficulty in getting the women's community to associate themselves with our group because it was not exclusively lesbian-run," he said.

Diffusions wants to act as an umbrella group for separate gay and lesbian projects that can be coordinated into one unified event. "We each have different things to offer. The festival has no singular message, except to show the variety of interpretations people make with their lives," said Chackal.

This year's festival has three separate projects. The first week, at the Cinémathèque, will feature programmes in the international category. The second week at the

NFB will present an homage to Michel Tremblay. A final section entitled "AIDS and the Media" will round out the festival. Twenty-four programmes of feature films and shorts will be shown all together.

The foremost criteria in programming was quality, secondly, finding films about gays by gays, then films by gays though not about gays and, finally, films about gays by straights. The Tremblay films are especially exciting to the organizers because, "through them is revealed the development of an artist and an image of ourselves in the Québécois context," said Chackal.

Chackal considers film an important aspect of increasing the visibility of gay and lesbian activism. "We always have to translate straight images to our context. It is so much healthier to see gay characters as it gets rid of any identifying crisis. Gay cinema takes out the invisibility factor," he said.

Chackal fears the gay and lesbian movement will collapse on itself. "(Gays) are privileged in Montréal because we are protected by laws, but discrimination does exist. The era of activism is now over and unpopular as the thing to do, but nothing is automatic. If we do not progress we will fall back because we are fighting against such a strong current."

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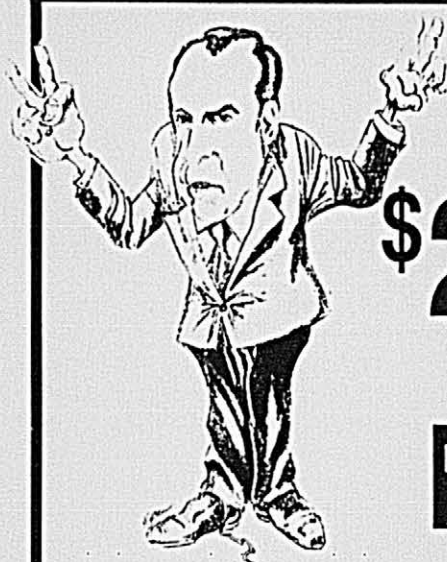
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Acting up in New York

by Eric Smith

In New York City, members of the traditionally complacent gay community are reacting to AIDS with a new militancy. Their message is clear: silence equals death. If we want to survive we have to fight.

ACT-UP, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, is the product of frustration and anger within the gay community. It is a reaction against a government and a medical system which ignored the AIDS crisis and which continues to deal with the illness ineffectually.

In an interview with the *Daily*, Sarah Schulman, ACT-UP activist and *Village Voice* contributor, summed up the effects of AIDS on the gay community. She said AIDS has brought "sex, hypocrisy, race, class, and health care" into open discussion and has led to a new gay militancy. "A lot of the men in ACT-UP were not political. They had high expectations from society when the illness first appeared," she said.

Schulman has been involved in ACT-UP since its inception in March of 1987. The organization began after New York author and gay liberation activist Larry Kramer challenged the community to respond to the AIDS crisis. Kramer has since left the group over disagreements about the structure of ACT-UP. "Kramer wants to lead," said Schulman, "and ACT-UP doesn't want a leader."

The structure of ACT-UP makes it unique. The group rejects any ideological framework other than a commitment to direct action. "It's a non-partisan group of individuals united in anger," said Schulman.

Once a week, approximately 300 people crowd into the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Centre in New York City for a town meeting. Two facilitators present new developments in AIDS research and lead the discussion on upcoming actions. Actions are coordinated by various committees and range from legislative lobbying to direct action protests called 'zaps'. Members of ACT-UP individually choose which actions to participate in. "Anybody can do anything they want," said Schulman, "there is no effort to have a united perspective."

Zaps are ACT-UP's most visible actions. The first zap was a traffic stoppage on Wall Street to protest the lack of government activity in approving trials of experimental drugs. Nineteen people were arrested and the demonstration got substantial media coverage.

ACT-UP's public image is one of its most effective aspects according to Schulman. The group's 'Silence equals death' motto is recognized throughout the city.

Other actions have included picketing William Buckley hotel room,

zapping the offices of *Cosmopolitan*, silent protests during mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral, and die-ins at various locations throughout New York.

ACT-UP's involvement in getting drugs released expands beyond direct action. They have distributed needles and syringes before such distribution was legalized last month. As well, in collaboration with ACT-UP, activist doctors have formed the Community Resource Initiative (CRI) to test drugs independently. Members of CRI have distributed the recipe of AL-721, an Israeli developed lipid-based food product that is currently banned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Schulman said women are central to the organizational process of ACT-UP although their numbers are small within the organization. "There are only ten to twenty women in ACT-UP, of which five are in leadership positions," said Schulman. "Women have been

political longer and know how to organize, men don't," she added.

According to Schulman, the political experience of lesbians in the women's movement has allowed



them to take on organizational roles in the newly militant gay movement. "Straight women never did anything for lesbians and (before the AIDS crisis) men didn't act like they needed women," she said. "Now, men get sick and who's going to take care of them?"

Schulman commented on the Canadian lesbian and gay movement. "It looks like nothing's happening in Montréal and it's going to

stay that way until it gets more visible and it hits you," she said.

She talked about British Columbia's Bill 34 which has since become law. Under this act, people with AIDS can be placed under quarantine by provincial health officials. "Quarantine is the worst thing that can happen," she said.

Schulman said the AIDS crisis necessitates immediate direct action due to its overwhelming proportions. "In New York, there's so many cases every person you call knows someone with AIDS. Your social life is going to hospitals and funerals," she said.

Despite such odds, Schulman is confident about ACT-UP's role. "We're the first gay organization to have a modern look," she said.

Building sex-positive identity

by Dwayne Williams

In the face of AIDS, safe sex and positive gay identity have been linked. One cannot survive without the other.

Since the advent of the AIDS crisis in 1981, the gay male community has become increasingly aware that safe sex is necessary for survival. In the face of fear, guilt, ostracism, discrimination, loneliness, suffering or death, safe sex has the power to reconstruct a positive gay identity that will ultimately affirm both life and community.

Yet many safe sex programmes focus only on risk-reduction. They do not examine how safe sex can

change gay male identity to permanently decrease high-risk sexual behaviour.

Most gay safe sex education to date has focused on changing certain central practices of individuals. Even the most sex-positive, gay-positive 'safe sex' education has been perceived as judgemental and limiting. Current safe sex guidelines suggest the complete elimination of anal intercourse (since condoms are not always reliable) and other practices that are important to gay sexuality. Some gay men are concerned that modifying or eliminating a central practice, such as anal intercourse, means they are no longer gay. Despite such concerns, no alternatives have been offered.

Programs that emphasize low-risk sexual practices along with physical pleasure and identity are minimal.

Consequently the safe sex concern has not been integrated into the fabric of gay male sexual culture. Rather, it has revolved around individual acts and an individual's decision-making process. The gay male community has not reassessed its sexual practices and determined changes in value and behaviour as a whole.

The task for gay men is to simultaneously alter their sexual practices according to safe sex guidelines and to reaffirm the community in conjunction with these new priorities and decisions.

'Safe sex' encourages gay men to grow out of 'rampant and wanton' sexual behaviour and into 'mature' relationships. While this advocacy, in theory, may make some sense, it bears little relationship to the complexity of gay male sexuality. In a sexual culture that has idealized anonymity, promiscuity and sexual exploration, the suggestion of monogamy is doomed to be an unattractive alternative.

Decreasing partners without eliminating body fluid exchange through the use of condoms, changes in particular practices, the adoption of alternative forms of sex or the use of effective spermicidal agents will do nothing to limit the spread of the virus. An effective approach is to focus on type rather than on frequency of activity.

In a heterosexual society, the process of developing safe sex guidelines often confuses sexual norms with ones that are actually

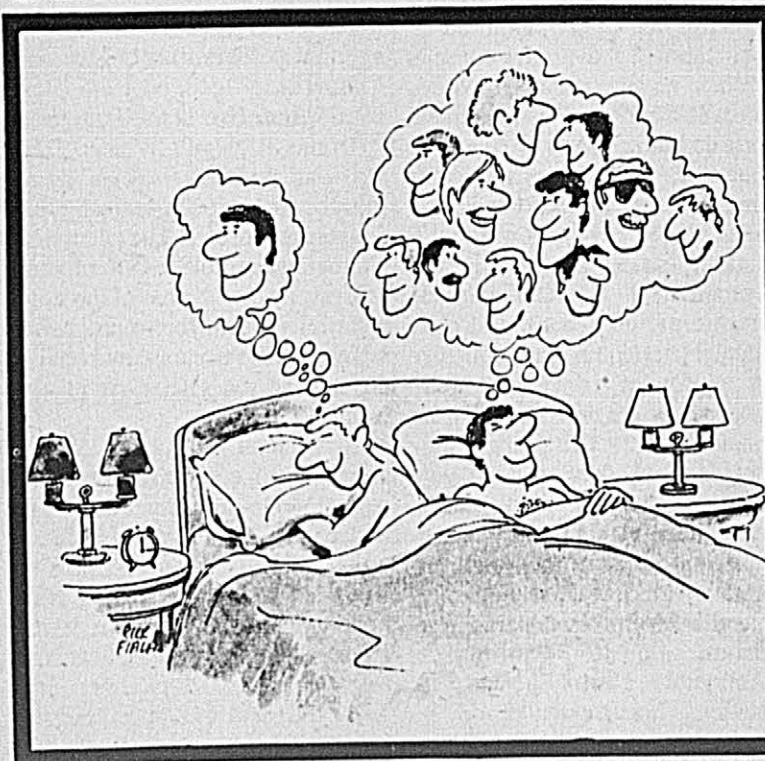
risk-reducing. Some gay activists and certainly many conservatives do not see the destruction of institutions—like the bathhouses of San Francisco—that support promiscuity and anonymous sex as a loss. But the debate involving civil liberties and public health excludes the real issue of gay male sexuality and sexual practice.

Safe sex guidelines cannot ignore the fact that some gay men want and will continue to want anonymous and promiscuous sexual behaviour in spite of the AIDS epidemic. Safe sex programmes must offer alternative and imaginative ways of fulfilling these needs without the risk of transmitting or contracting AIDS.

The establishment of jerk-off clubs like the San Francisco Jacks, for example, represents the pragmatic extension of just such a programme. These clubs deliberately eroticize masturbation, a practice that is often regarded as juvenile and unfulfilling. The creation of such a group counters the notion that 'safe sex' is dull, monogamous and individualistic.

According to author Dennis Altman, "partly because of its origin as a communal rather than a commercial venture, the San Francisco Jacks are developing into a club, with a growing number of activities outside the Monday night 'parties'."

Unlike the San Francisco bathhouses, where monitors are required, the Jacks are self-regulating. Peer pressure has proved sufficient to limit sexual activities to those generally regarded as safe. The thought of several hundred



continued on page 18

Expanding the mandate of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute

Concordia students for lesbian studies

by Susana Bejar

Most students do not recognize the prevalence of classroom heterosexism. The same students who are horrified at the idea of racism or sexism read blindly from heterosexist textbooks. As well, heterosexist attitudes are part of the curriculum of many Canadian Universities.

A coalition was formed last year at Concordia University to fight the lack of lesbian representation in academia. The coalition has a dual mandate, the integration of lesbian material and perspective into all applicable areas and the creation of courses specifically on lesbianism. Eventually they hope to see a degree-granting lesbian studies program at Concordia.

"Many women do not see lesbianism as a legitimate academic pursuit," said Carolyn Gammon, the head of the coalition. "They have learnt their heterosexist lessons well."

The coalition's efforts have been concentrated on lobbying Concordia's Simone de Beauvoir Women's Studies Institute. Over the past year the coalition has held weekly meetings, public forums and invited guest speakers. It was recently given club status by Concordia University Students' Association (CUSA).

"We feel that if we're going to get an in anywhere it will be with women's studies," said Gammon. "Why not go the road that's easiest and where you feel you have a legitimate in?"

"You would expect that being a women's institute they would already have a lesbian movement but they don't, there's nothing happening along those lines," said Gammon. "It's ironic. The Simone de Beauvoir Institute has this reputation for being some radical lesbian hell-hole, and it isn't." "Concordia has a radical reputation, but its relative. Conservatism certainly exists at Concordia," she said.

The coalition has been preparing information on lesbian studies programmes in other universities throughout North America and the United Kingdom. It is in the process of looking through texts currently in use at Concordia and compiling heterosexist/homophobic excerpts from them. It is also putting together a collection of stories on homophobia in the classroom drawn from the actual experiences of gay students and faculty.

Eventually the coalition will approach professors who teach applicable courses with ideas on how they could apply lesbian perspectives to their courses as well as lists of books they could use.

"There should be a course dedicated to the subject of lesbianism and heterosexism," said Gammon. "By 1990 we would like to see core courses being given at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute on lesbianism. By the mid-90's it would be

good to see a course dedicated to the lesbian perspective in every applicable medium. And there is certainly no reason why next year there couldn't be a literature course on lesbianism."

Several professors and faculty members have supported the coalition's efforts by integrating lesbian perspectives into their courses. However, coalition members fear basing the programme on only a few professors. "This integration does not come from within the structure, so when that professor leaves, so will that perspective," said Gammon.

The coalition has not met with any hostile opposition but rather with a general lack of interest. "Lesbian studies is not an accepted issue. And some people are generally ignorant or apathetic about what it is we're working for," said Susan O'Donnell, Director of Concordia's Women's Centre and coalition member.

"We're not waiting for a reaction," said Gammon. "We're taking

an offensive stand. We aren't going to ask 'Can we do this?', we're telling people 'You're missing this, you need to do something about it.'"

Gammon said success of the coalition depends on the continuity of their efforts. "If a coalition like ours keeps going we

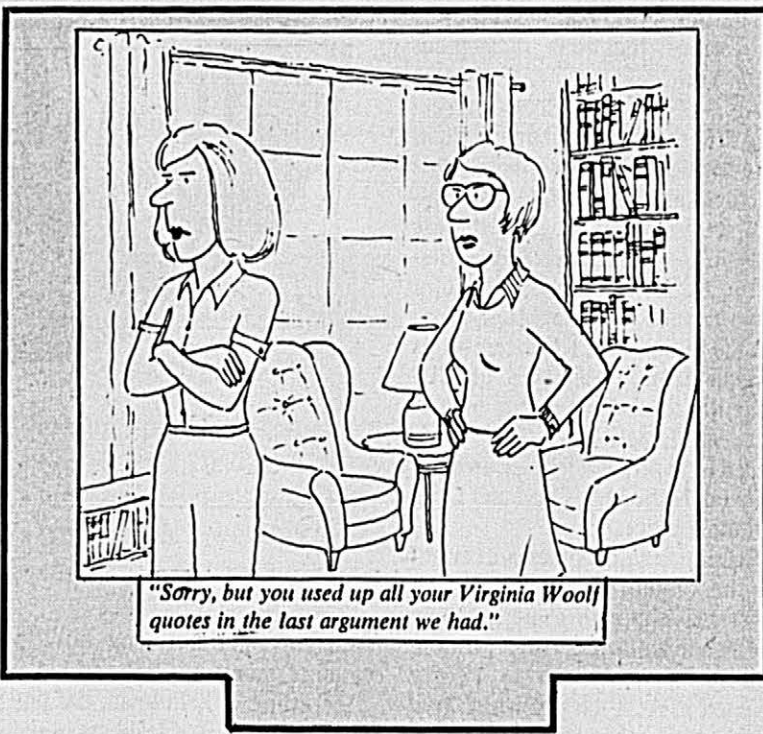
can do miracles," said Gammon, "but women move on. We're all students. It's a question of keeping the ball rolling after we leave."

O'Donnell is optimistic about the success of lesbian studies programmes. "Ten or fifteen years ago just the idea of women's studies was laughed at. I'm sure we'll see the same progress the women's movement has as people become less homophobic and more accepting of the lesbian identity."

Despite Concordia's lead, McGill does not seem to be ready to follow suit. "One of the problems with McGill is that it barely has a women's studies program," said Nairne Holtz, coordinator of the lesbian caucus of Gays and Lesbians of McGill (GALOM).

"The courses listed as women's courses are frequently cancelled, and of those that exist half aren't really women's studies. They just deal with certain social issues, one of which is women," Holtz added. "Until McGill gets it together, we

continued on page 18



Julien Green: l'amour interdit

André Mather

L'autobiographie *Jeunes années*, de Julien Green, est l'histoire veridique et touchante d'un écrivain dont la carrière sera couronnée par de nombreuses distinctions. Il est notamment membre de l'Académie des arts et lettres des Etats-Unis.

Issu de parents américains originaires des Etats du sud fixés en France depuis 1895, Julien Green est né en 1900 à Paris. En 1916, il abjure le protestantisme pour se convertir au catholicisme. En 1917, il s'engage dans les ambulances américaines puis en 1918 est détaché comme aspirant dans l'armée française. Démobilisé en 1919, il hésite entre une vocation religieuse, la peinture et la musique, et décide d'achever ses études aux Etats-Unis, sa patrie qu'il ne connaît pas, à l'Université de Virginie (1919-1922).

Au début du troisième tome de *Jeunes années*, Green écrit cette citation de Villon : « En mon pays suis en terre lointaine. » Mais son séjour en Virginie ne sera pas autant une découverte de soi. Très tôt il est séduit par le visage d'un certain Mark dont il tombera amoureux :

« Je l'aime, pensai-je. Il faudrait mourir. Or, mourir, pourquoi? Parce qu'il n'y avait pas de place, dans le monde actuel, pour un jeune homme amoureux d'un autre. Personne ne comprendrait. On me croirait fou et tout d'abord le garçon aux joues roses, en admettant que j'eusse l'inexprimable audace de lui dire mon secret. »

Ainsi, le jeune Julien Green passera de longs mois à admirer de loin

un Adonis inaccessible. Mais il se verra bientôt confronté à ses propres convictions religieuses. Après le long discours pieux d'un pasteur presbytérien, il pensera : « Que m'importaient maintenant les beaux visages que je voyais autour de moi? ... Je ne voulais plus être le jouet du démon. » Cependant, il continuera d'être séduit par les beaux visages masculins. Alors qu'il donnera un cours de grammaire française, ses yeux se fixeront sur un élève. « Le garçon était blond et doré comme un habitant de l'Olympe. »

On peut dire que l'admiration qu'il a pour certains garçons est d'abord purement esthétique. Il le dit lui-même lorsqu'il parle de son affection pour Mark comme d'une immense tendresse plutôt qu'un désir charnel. Suivant les conseils de Nick, un garçon un peu louche, Julien se décide à aller frapper à la porte de Mark; à partir de ce jour se noue entre les deux une amitié qui durera des décennies. Mais jamais Julien n'osera avouer son amour à Mark. Il sera sans cesse fasciné par le problème du bien et du mal, tourmenté par un débat moral dans lequel il parviendra mal à concilier ses profondes convictions religieuses avec ses désirs sexuels. La crainte du péché l'empêchera souvent de s'abandonner à ses pulsions, et l'ombre d'un amour malheureux planera sur toute sa jeunesse. Pendant un cours de littérature grecque ancienne, Julien entendra son professeur parler avec horreur de la « honte de l'Antiquité », c'est-à-dire des connotations homosexuelles de la mythologie et des tragédies grecques.

De retour à Paris après un séjour de trois ans aux Etats-Unis, Green se mettra à écrire, et à faire de longues promenades le soir, après le repas. Il marchera parfois jusqu'à la place du Trocadéro où il rencontrera ses premières aventures nocturnes; à partir de ce moment il s'aventurera régulièrement dans les rues parisiennes pour rencontrer des minidylles (« one-night-stands ») et, disons-le, assouvir ses besoins homosexuels. Ils se promèneront tous les deux le long des quais, et Julien sera sur le point de tout avouer lorsqu'il dira : « Je regrette, c'est impossible, Mark. »

...lesbian menace

continued from page 5
a genuine lesbian, truly twisted, and I know it...oh god, why am I lesbian?" from *Girl in the Twilight*).

Donna Richard's *Women Like Me* was probably written by a straight woman. The lesbian relationship is confused. The emotional interaction (complete with constant analysis by the heroine of the state of the relationship) between the two women seems accurate and realistic, but the sex scenes are totally twisted.

Novels such as this are geared to a straight, voyeuristic audience and manage to be simultaneously lurid and vague. For example, Richard writes, "Chris squirmed like a wounded serpent, her flesh afire under mine. It was not reality, it was a tempestuous nightmare that was half pain and half pleasure. She screamed and wrapped herself around me as we both sought and found the ultimate heights." It is

Mais il se rendra compte que Mark « avait tout compris depuis longtemps, depuis le soir où j'étais venu frapper à sa porte en Virginie. »

Ainsi l'Amérique sera toujours pour Julien le souvenir de Mark. « Chacun de nous a eu son drame. J'ai eu le mien, là-bas, dans un des plus beaux décors du monde. On y comptait autant de colonnes grecques pour meubler dix mille tragédies... »

Jeunes Années est publié aux éditions du Seuil. Agé de 87 ans, Green vient de publier un nouveau roman, *Les Pays lointains*.

possible that heterosexist, patriarchal editors imposed their viewpoints on these novels, as Richard's books tend to be quite sympathetic towards lesbians.

Given the overall homophobic message in even the best of these books one

wonders why anyone would even bother to glance at them. Politically correct reasons, such as reclaiming lesbian her-story and confronting evil society, can be given. But aside from that, these novels are hysterically funny and occasionally have hot sex scenes.

At any rate, these books have to be read to be believed. They can be unearthed in junk stores, attics and second-hand book stores. Some can be found as reprinted editions at your local lesbian and gay bookstore. Happy hunting.

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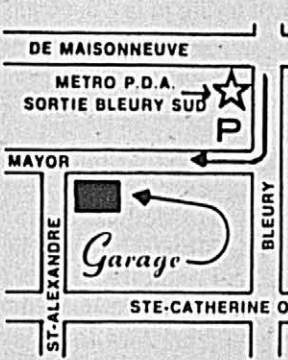
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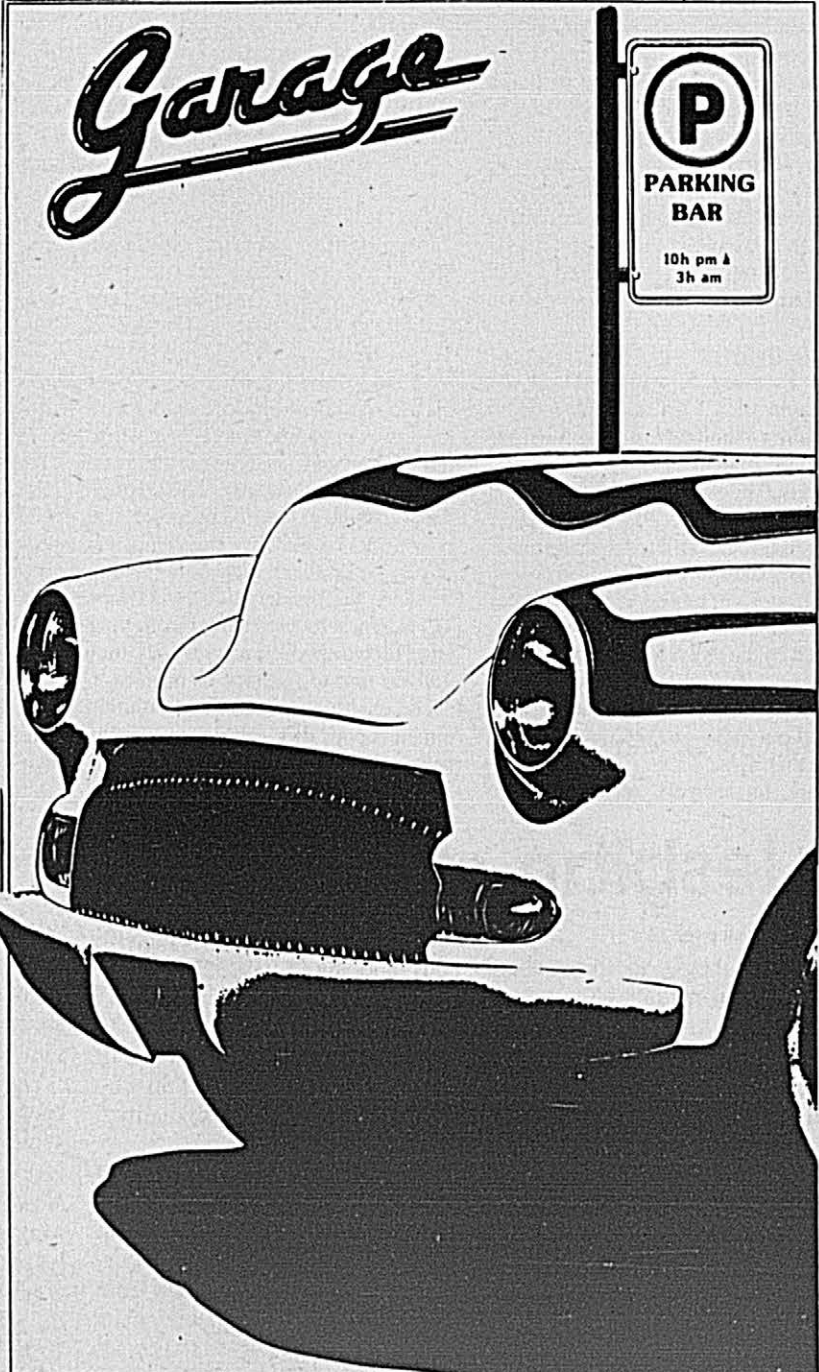
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To the Daily:

I am writing this short letter because at times the ignorance of some people is so overwhelming that it is hard to keep quiet. I am referring to May Chiu's letter to the editor published in the *McGill Daily* on February 15 (1988). My reply to those who sympathize with that kind of view is that you shouldn't criticize a fundamental right (such as free speech) because of ambitious individuals who have abused it in the past (and present). Moreover, the examples that were cited in the letter (such as Hitler, Botha, Voerwood and Reagan) should not serve as a point of criticism, but rather as an example of what a society is subsequently like when fundamental rights, such as free speech, are withheld. To do otherwise is to dwell in the realm of pseudo-intellectualism.

John Horvath
Education U2

To the Daily:

With regards to ASUS President Geoff Moore's letter (*Daily*, February 8th): It is difficult to speak of such a disrespectful event as the macaroni wrestling match without becoming angry. Such a deliberate waste of food is a disgraceful display of arrogance, and the lame defences that Moore offers are embarrassing. There is absolutely no justification for making a sport of throwing food on the ground and rolling in it, when such a large part of the world is under-nourished, and people suffer every day from the pain of starvation.

He suggests that "taken on its own, wasting two hundred pounds of macaroni could show a lack of tact," but coupled with the ASUS's donation to the Montréal Food Bank it is somehow acceptable. What nonsense. On par, perhaps, with burning a dollar for every dollar of funds raised, though a more repugnant juxtaposition of benevolence and mockery is hardly possible.

The world is hungry, and to defile food for sport, entertainment, or any reason is more than insensitive to the physical and emotional struggle of those who go without sustenance, it is to actively become one of their tormentors, and to sneer at their anguish.

Lelf R. Montin
Alumni, 1987

To the Daily:

On February 5, we witnessed the spectacle of a Contra representative defending murderers, a bystander advocating murder ("Go back to the showers," he reportedly told a Jewish protestor) and the PSSA President, Tony Flanz, condoning the show in the name of "free speech." Some may agree with him. Even murderers themselves, it may be argued, have the right to be invited by the PSSA to speak in Stewart Biology 1/4. Some members of the audience then concluded that we who turned our backs on the Contras do not share this right.

Flanz, for his part, announced that

only McGill students could attend the question session. Free speech, it seemed, was not for the general public. He removed the restriction when told it was illegal, but those who planned to confront the Contra on his army's "routine torture and execution of prisoners," (Amnesty International Yearbook—1986) had other obstacles to overcome. Not only would he be answering questions for precisely one-half hour, but also he would act as his own moderator—and as a skilled propagandist, he knows not to recognize, until force, anyone holding the Amnesty Yearbook.

We are wondering if the Contra made it a condition of his speaking at McGill that he choose his own questioners. This would mean that our right of dissent was systematically violated. Whatever the case, it's clear that the Contra 'event', more than an affirmation of the right of an apologist for torture to have his say, was a denial of people's right to oppose him.

Freedom of speech is not good advertising copy, Tony, it is a fundamental right. If you don't believe in it, don't talk about it so much.

Laura Bush
Arts U2
May Chiu
Arts U3
Amy Kaler
MA U1

To the Daily:

It's too bad that May Chiu (letters February 15, 1988) feels s/he cannot defend the right of anyone to say anything which leads to murder.

It was not Hitler's freedom of speech which resulted in Germany's participation in World War II, but the fact that enough of his fellow countrymen were willing to follow his ideas without objectively questioning them. Perhaps if they had, Hitler could never have got beyond a soapbox in a park.

When some idiot stand up and says something "which leads to murder," everyone of us can use our own freedom of speech to say, "fuck you."

Ethan Allen

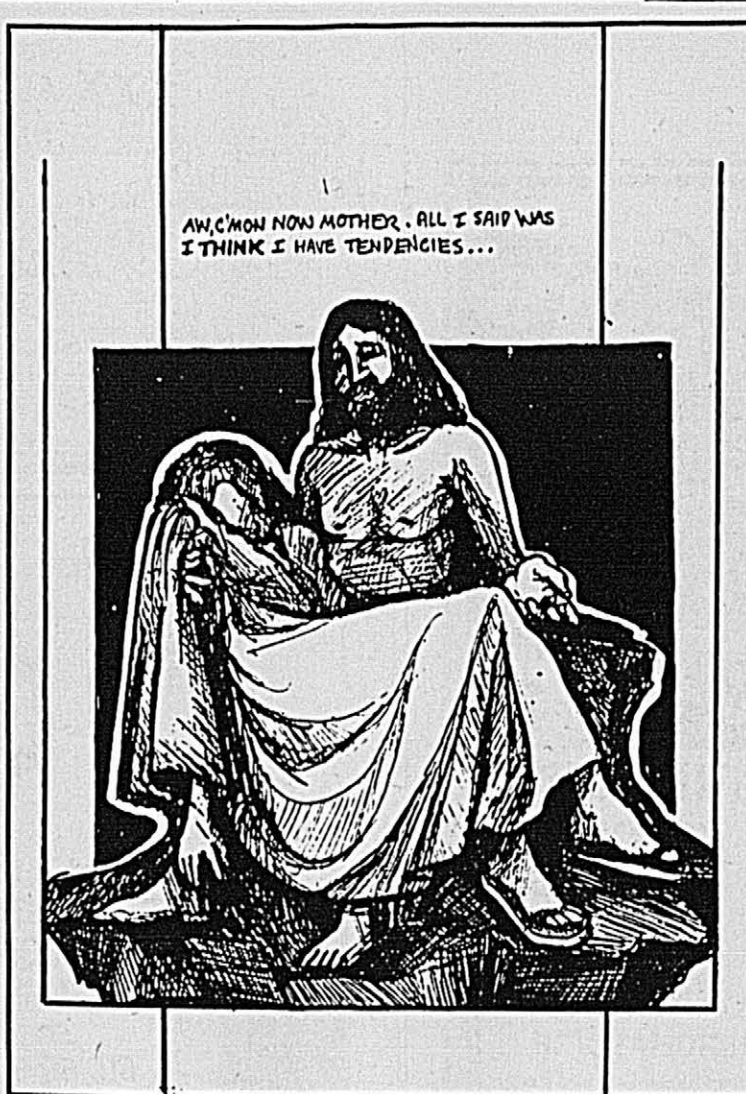
To the Daily:

In response to back turners, February 5th.

"They said 'let Hitler speak', and look what happened."—Heckler at Tony Ybarra.

Let us look at what happened: over ten million Jews were killed, four million at one camp alone. The world turned its back on one of the great atrocities of our century. The German people, for all extent and purposes, had been deceived. Having caught the fever of pan-nationalism, they were blind to whatever their leaders didn't want them to see. Their focus resulted from their anger; fixed upon the party's ends, they took no time to examine its means.

The execution of the Final Solution turned upon this ignorance. If the people believed the propaganda, the High Command could do as they



pleased without internal opposition. Our opposition to the present war in Central America is a healthy sign of our increased perception. It does not, however, require an act so childish as turning our back. It was arrogance—the delusion of absolute knowledge—that led to the justification of the Final Solution.

The nazis didn't deal with what they thought to be the source of their problems, they removed it. We hope that society in the 1980s has progressed to the point at which we can confront our problems. This requires hearing both sides of an argument.

Everyone has the right to speak; should not everyone have the ability to listen?

Aram Zadow U1 Arts
Jim Delorey
U2 Arts
Mike Emerson
U1 Arts
Robert Cowan
U2 Science

To the Daily:

An article entitled "Students Dispute Reserve Profits" appeared in the February 1 edition of the *Daily*. As I was responsible for bringing this issue to the attention of the paper, I feel that I must point out several aspects of the matter which were not properly addressed, both in the article and in the State Behaviour class.

Although no purpose is served in criti-

cizing the way the article was written, I feel that in the effort to write a sensational article, the author failed to convey the main issue clearly. All that is succeeded in doing was to antagonize all parties concerned. Students were not disputing profits made by the PSSA from sales of the copies. I think most members of the class would agree that their association should receive funds for providing a very valuable service, especially since those funds are put toward other student services. However, a representative of the PSSA offered copied of the reserve readings

...positive identity

continued from page 13

men in an abandoned warehouse, naked except for their sneakers, and in various states of sexual excitement, may seem disgusting to some, comical to others, but many of the men who attend have found in these clubs an important source of both communal support and sexual satisfaction.

Jerk-off clubs, unlike bathhouses, bars and tea-rooms, integrate gay men into a community. Gays, by virtue of their responsible, safe sexual choices, participate in building that community. These clubs shift the focus of safe sex from danger toward community and safety. Safe sex thus becomes integrated into gay male identity. Neither sexual repression nor sexual individualism will meet the need for both agency and community that will lead to sensible, pleasurable and open sex in the age of AIDS.

Responsible choices must be highlighted as part of sexual identity and eroticized within sexual practice if safe sex decisions are to become consistently applied life decisions. Alternatives to high-risk sex must be offered (like masturbation in a jerk-off club) and the origins and reinforcements of high-

for sale to the State Behaviour class at 4¢ per page. He stated that it was purely a non-profit service to students. After paying \$12 in advance, I realized that the PSSA had effectively charged almost double the originally offered price per page. I asked the PSSA representative if he could do something about the matter of at least come before the class and explain. He flatly refused. Since I felt that I was not being dealt with fairly, I notified the *Daily*. The PSSA's reaction was to ask Professor James to tell the class that a partial reimbursement would be available to those who wanted to obtain it. They see this as a goodwill gesture on their part and in no way an admission that there was any deception. I asked Professor James if I could speak to the class because I felt the issue was not being properly addressed, but he refused saying that there was nothing more to say. Considering the position he is in, I cannot blame him.

I believe that this is not about a few dollars. All the students involved are studying politics and I think that the majority of them would agree that this world could be a better place in which to live. I believe that politics is not something out there but rather is something which begins rights here and right now. It means taking personal responsibility for your world, instead of just letting things happen. Things like this are going on all the time in many areas of our society but only because people let them. I think it is a very sad state of affairs when something like this is allowed to happen in the political science students' association in one of Canada's leading universities (sic). Even more sad is the unwillingness of anyone either to take responsibility for it or to do something about it. In a way, we are very lucky to have this small opportunity to choose to take responsibility to make it right. From here on in the stakes only get higher and the consequences more severe. I am not trying to antagonize anyone, I would just like everyone to take an honest look at what is going on. Change always begins at home

Iain Scott
Arts U1

risk activity must be understood in. Safe sex education must fight myths about both gay male sexuality and male sexuality in general. Some of these false assumptions are: men are hypersexual; men are not responsible for the safety of sex; intimacy is to be avoided; personal success is based on sexual success; sex should be hot and out-of-control; sex must include penetration; sex must include orgasm; talking about sex with one's partner is a sign of weakness; gay sex must remain concealed. These false assumptions and others are deeply entrenched in the gay male psyche. In the liberation of gay male sexuality, change must be accompanied by an enduring positive gay identity.

The ability to adapt quickly and readily to the changes in sexual behaviour that AIDS necessitates requires a positive sense of empowerment, control, self-esteem and satisfaction of sexual desire from every gay man. When sexual choice is reframed from 'do' or 'don't' to how one might engage in alternative, safer and pleasurable sexual activity, the transformation of sexual responsibility from a perceived limitation into an empowering aspect of sexual identity will emerge.

...lesbian studies at Concordia

continued from page 16

can't even begin to think about pushing lesbian studies."

According to Charles Bertrand, Concordia's Dean of Arts and Science, "Universities are places of intellectual freedom where all viewpoints are allowed expression and therefore if a certain group wishes to form a coalition to discuss issues that it deems important we believe the environment of a university can serve as a forum for such discussions."

Responding to Bertrand, Gam-

mon said, "put your course descriptions and book lists where your mouth is."

"People today no longer dare to openly discriminate on the basis of race or gender," she said, "So why should they in terms of sexuality?"

O'Donnell summed up the coalition's intentions. "In general, what we are trying to say is that most of what is taught in the curriculum of universities comes from a very white, male and heterosexist perspective or bias," she said.

"We're just trying to say there are other things out there. And we encourage any other groups with social or ethnic identities to do the same thing."

The lesbian studies coalition will be presenting guest speaker Lise Weil, professor of lesbian literature at Hamilton College in New York and editor of *Trivia Magazine* (a feminist/lesbian ethics magazine), on March 10 at 20h30 in the lounge of the Simone de Beauvoir institute (2170 Bishop).

Ads may be placed through the Daily business office, room B-17, Student Union Building, 9am - 3pm. Deadline is 2pm two weeks prior to date of publication.

McGill students: \$3.00 per day; \$7.00 for 3 consecutive days; \$2.00 per day for more than 3 consecutive days. McGill faculty and staff: \$4.00 per day. Exact change only, please. Boxed ads are available at the cost of \$4.00 per ad / per day — no discounts on boxing.

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The McGill Daycare Centre: two daycare places open for four and five year olds group [birthdays between Oct 1 1982 to Sept 30 1983] for information please call 398-6943.

Willing females and males needed for student haircuts. Supervised by professionals. Wednesdays 5pm. Cut \$8, perms & colour \$15. Call 849-9231 for appointments. Estetica, 2175 Crescent.

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367 - CARS FOR SALE

Not "Bob Marley & The Wailers", but a 1973 model 2002 BMW. \$4,000 - negotiable. Ask for Yves or leave message, 526-3291.

372 - LOST & FOUND

LOST or stolen -- in Architecture Bldg., Feb 17 - a blue/green sports bag with shoes, sweats,

leotard. If found please return. No questions asked. 848-1758.

LOST -- Friday Feb 19 near men's washroom in basement of Union Bldg - two rings; gold signet ring [crest: heart with wings]; the other is a large heavy silver thumb ring. If found contact Ian Pringle at 398-6787, 525-6526. No questions will be asked, reward (over \$100) is offered. Rings could also be dropped off at Radio McGill.

374 - PERSONAL

McGill Nightline... listening, information and referrals... till the wee hours of the morning. 7 days-a-week. 6pm till 3am. 398-6246.

Gay or lesbian? Need to talk? Peer counselling offered in Union 417, Monday to Thursday, from 19h00 to 22h00 or call GALOM at 398-6822.

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Going nowhere for reading week? Neither are we. McGill Nightline: remaining open Feb 19-28 from 9pm to 3am: 398-6246. Resuming regular hours Feb 29.

Welcome home you guys and gals! How was your week? Did you see your pals? Call McGill Nightline, 398-6246, we'd love to hear about it.

Gals et lesbiennes de 25 ans et moins, la filière française de jeunesse Lambda t'invite à jaser, tous les vendredis 19h30 à la salle "la mi-temps", CLSC centre-ville, rue Bleury, angle Ste-Catherine.

Feeling powerless? Or at least mildly frustrated with the status quo? Do something useful for a change. Contribute to the establishment of OPIRG. Vote "Yes" March 9 10, 11.

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385 - NOTICES

Questions concerning birth control? Women's Union Birth Control Co-op, Union 423. Tuesdays and Thursdays - afternoons, Jennifer or Jacqueline. Condoms, foam, gel and diaphragms available..

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